Everybody's Magazine

The Mary Roberts Rinehart Serial

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"HERE YOU ARE."

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Everybody's Magazine
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General Leonard Wood combines in a very high degree the qualities of entire manliness with entire uprightness and cleanliness of character. He is a man of high ideals who scorns everything mean and base and who possesses those robust and hardy qualities of body and mind for the lack of which no merely negative virtue can atone. He is by nature a soldier of the highest type.

What I thus said of Leonard Wood in "The Rough Riders," I now say with greater emphasis than ever. He has shown himself one of the most useful and patriotic of American public servants, and has made all good Americans his debtors by what he has done. At the close of the Santiago campaign he became Governor of the Province, then Governor-General of Cuba; he afterward served in the Philippines and in various high positions in the army at home, including that of Chief of Staff. During these eighteen years he has rendered to America service of the very highest values and of a kind that could be rendered only by a man of wholly exceptional power and ability, ardent in his big-hearted devotion to the honor of the flag and the welfare of the nation.

Theodore Roosevelt

LEONARD WOOD—AMERICAN

MAN OF THE HOUR

by ISAAC F. MARCOSSON

ON DECEMBER 18th, 1916, the man to whom America will look for leadership in war stood before a committee of Congress and said this:

"We are not contemplating an army which will be trained and organized for a war of aggression or conquest. What we want is a citizen force back of our regular establishment, organized and trained so as to command the respect of the world sufficiently to make it certain that an attack on us would be costly and doubtful of outcome; an organization which would insure our voice in the world's affairs receiving consideration; one which would enable us to pursue our just policies without threat of interference. We want a force that can be turned out without asking great sacrifices of certain classes to the advantage of others. We want no more bounties for service in war. We want a system which will call for a tax of personal service rather than a tax for the payment of others to perform the service."

The man who said this was Major-General Leonard Wood. He was pleading for the enactment of laws that would make a system of universal military training the basis of our National Defense. Since the beginning of the world war—and long before—General Wood has been making this

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"HE IS WHAT YOU AMERICANS WOULD CALL 'SOME SOLDIER.'"

plea to Americans from coast to coast. We have paid him little heed. Undaunted, he has continued his warnings against an hour of crisis. On February third it seemed the hour had struck. And then America remembered—and looked to him for leadership. As this article goes to press, no one can foresee what lies before America. The eyes of the nation are on its military establishment. What manner of man is Leonard Wood, Officer of the Line, Prophet of Preparedness?

WE WERE not so many miles behind the front. As you listened you could hear the dull, regular boom of the guns which meant death and destruction all along the far-flung battle-line. Suddenly down the road streaked a gray service automobile. It stopped, and out leaped a lean, sinewy, khakied figure of a man with a tanned and clear-cut face. You did not need to look at the crown and stars on his sleeves to know that he was of colonel's rank. His very presence radiated authority and commanded respect. There was a firm hand-shake and the quiet, cordial greeting of the British soldier.

We spoke of many things that summer day somewhere in France, but principally war. We were in the presence of the great and compelling Thing that was making history almost before our eyes. We talked, too, of America: her unpreparedness and apathy to all the lessons of the stupendous struggle; most of all about the men who would be needed for field leadership in case a grim thunderbolt struck us.

"You've got one great soldier over there," said the colonel.

"Whom do you mean?" I asked.

"Why, General Leonard Wood, of course," was the answer. "He is what you Americans would call 'some soldier.'"

I beamed with pride. Who wouldn't? This frank praise of an American general at a time when respect for our military prestige was at its lowest ebb in Europe, was as refreshing as a cooling draft on a torrid day. And what the British colonel said was echoed all up and down that flaming front where human worth is appraised at its real value.

The United States, and for that matter a considerable part of the world, has heard a good deal of Leonard Wood. With the exception of General George W. Goethals, he has been the most conspicuous member of our military establishment since the Spanish-American War, this soldier-doctor who rose from obscure assistant surgeon to be a major-general with an international reputation in the incredibly short space of ten years. He is the shining example of what can be wrought out of the profession of arms.

Though he has been healer, administrator, builder, diplomat, statesman, and fighting man, he occupies to-day a more noteworthy place before his countrymen perhaps than ever before. It lies in the fact that he is not only the symbol and instrument of the most significant force set in motion in this country since the fateful sixties, but he has likewise been its most effective and eloquent voice.

General Wood did not need the spectacle of war-reddened Europe to make him realize his nation's need of adequate preparedness. All his life he has actually lived the creed of a necessary training to meet the contingency of conflict; he has literally incarnated the gospel of fitness that is the insurance against conflict. He is a self-made soldier who realizes in achievement and citizenship the fullest requirements of fundamental democracy. Without being a militarist he stands for all that military authority represents; he is everything that national service should teach and bestow.

PROBE his beginning and you discover at once the hall-mark of distinct Americanism. The man who planted the first outpost of our colonial power is a

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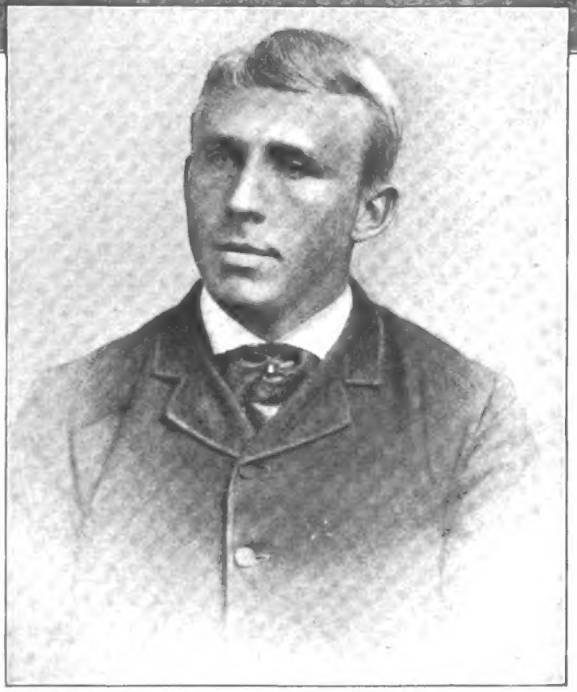
direct descendant of that *Mayflower* contingent that formed the corner-stone of the republic. His father was a country doctor of the old school, a soldier of the Civil War, who brought cheer and relief to scores of homes in and about Cape Cod. From him came the heritage of character and service.

Leonard Wood's first ambition was for the navy. Immediate family precedent proved stronger than inclination: he studied medicine at Harvard, hung out his shingle in a slum district in Boston, and after a year of struggle went to New York and passed second in a class of fifty-nine that took the examination for surgeon in the army. There was no immediate vacancy in the commissioned ranks of the Medical Corps, so the man destined to wear stars on his shoulder-straps really cut his army teeth as a civilian.

He participated in Lawton's famous campaign against the Apaches, which was an epic of the frontier. After two years of the most grueling service that the American army has ever known, Geronimo, who led the savage redskins, was brought back a captive. Part of this campaign was waged in the fastnesses of Sonora and Chihuahua, the country to the west of that in which Villa hid when General Pershing's punitive force went after him. Pershing's troops had the advantage of motor transport and aerial courier service. The Apache country was rough and difficult for the pack-mule,

THE STAFF OF GENERAL MILES. LEONARD WOOD IS ON THE EXTREME LEFT.



LEONARD WOOD AT THE AGE OF TWENTY, WHEN HE WAS A STUDENT AT THE HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL.

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and frequently this hardy animal could not be taken on some of the trails.

During those terrible months Wood demonstrated his endurance, and henceforth his career was to be one continuous test of this quality. For special and gallant conduct on this expedition, he received the much coveted Medal of Honor, the American Victoria Cross, bestowed only for conspicuous achievement.

Wood emerged from that racking Indian ordeal still unknown and merely a minor cog in the military machine. During the next ten years he had a variety of experience in which the quiet work of a surgeon joined with the courage and dash of the line officer. Early in the nineties he was assigned to Washington, where he became Presidential surgeon.

One night in 1896 he was invited to dine at the Lowndes' house in Washington. Just before the guests started in to dinner a sturdy, deep-chested, spectacled man entered the room with a smile on his animated face. Instantly the host had him by the hand and, turning to the army surgeon who stood alongside, said:

"Doctor Wood, I want you to meet Mr. Theodore Roosevelt."

Their hands met; there was a really sincere "Delighted-to-meet-you" salutation, and a pair of remarkable men, whose careers were to be closely entwined in action and history, came together.

That night Roosevelt and Wood walked home together. No two people ever had more in common. They were both Harvard graduates; strong, athletic, and fond of strenuous sports; both had fought Indians in the West, and they shared a feeling about the inevitableness of the conflict with Spain that now brooded over the horizon of peace.

With the destruction of the *Maine* in Havana Harbor that horizon broke into flame and we came to grips with Spain.

The hour of destiny for Roosevelt and Wood now struck. To Wood, in particular, the war meant everything, and for a reason not generally known. Shortly before the *Maine* episode, the future organizer of the Rough Riders had determined to abandon the army as a career and to try sheep-ranching in New Mexico. This step was dictated by the fact that promotion was slow and the field of action restricted.

Wood had definitely decided on this step and was preparing to go West when the break with Spain dashed all thought of resignation from his mind. In this episode you get a near parallel with Grant, who had left the army and was engaged in prosaic mercantile pursuits when Sumter was fired on. He left his desk to save the Union. So, too, did Wood now turn to the task which was to give him the fling into fame.

Roosevelt and Wood wanted to raise separate regiments in their respective states of New York and Massachusetts. Amid the tangle of red tape, the chaos, and the criminal lack of preparation that marked our military activities, this was impossible. During those days Wood and his co-workers, clashing everywhere with incompetent officialdom, realized the fallacy of the soft-voiced contention, preached so glibly by prating pacifists, that in the hour of dire emergency a million men would leap to arms. The millions were as ready to leap then as they are now; but it is a long step between the most ardent patriotism and the all-essential training and equipment to make that patriotism effective and protective. No wonder Wood resolved, even amid the distractions of those crowded hours, to dedicate himself to the doctrine of preparedness.

WE WERE face to face with war. Senator Warren had proposed the raising in the West of three regiments of mounted riflemen, to be classed as cavalry and made up of men having special qualifications of marksmanship and horsemanship. Wood was regarded, so far as experience was concerned, as a product of the Western country, and so was Roosevelt. Both were delighted with the Warren idea and keen to translate it into action.

Roosevelt was offered the colonelcy of one of these regiments, but he declined on the ground that it needed a trained military man. He said that he would accept the lieutenant-colonelcy if Wood became colonel. Secretary of War Alger liked the plan, gave Wood a desk in his office, and said to him:

"Don't let me hear a word from you until your regiment is raised. When your requisitions and other papers are all ready, bring them to me to sign." In ten minutes Secretary Alger gave the necessary instructions which led to the formation of the famous Rough Riders.

The world is familiar with the picturesque page that the Rough Riders wrote into

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American history. But what it does not know is the way Wood equipped that remarkable command. This throws such light upon the method and character of the spokesman for National Service that it is well worth explaining. It shows how resource and initiative triumphed over delay and unreadiness.

If you had any contact with conditions at Washington shortly after the outbreak of the Spanish War, you know that indescribable confusion prevailed. It is best—or should I say worst?—revealed by the remark made by a certain high military officer to Wood. He said with much annoyance:

"Here I had a magnificent system; my office and department were in good working order, and this damned war comes along and breaks it all up!"

Wood helped to smash it. He knew that to recruit and equip a regiment amid all that encircling chaos was wellnigh impossible. So he adopted the wholesale method, which likewise was the prepared method. He carefully assembled in proper form every document that bore on his task. This included telegrams to governors, calling on them for troops; requisitions on arsenals for arms and ammunition; orders on Government depots for uniforms and supplies. A stroke of the pen would make every one of these papers an official document. When he had them all at hand (and they made a stack nearly a foot high), he approached the desk of the Secretary of War and said to Mr. Alger:

IT WAS WOOD WHO ALWAYS SAID, NO MATTER WHAT THE EMERGENCY, "I'LL GO."

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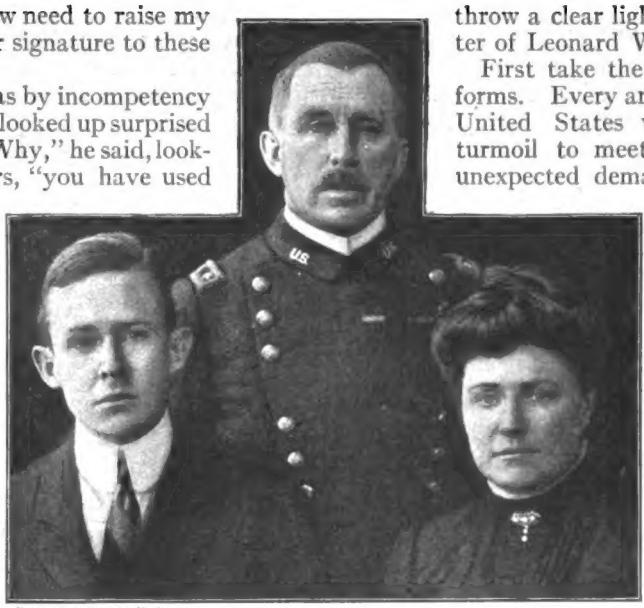
"All that I now need to raise my regiment is your signature to these papers."

Beset as he was by incompetency and sloth, Alger looked up surprised and startled. "Why," he said, looking at the papers, "you have used not only my name but the President's as well. Still, it's all right. We need this kind of constructive insubordination now. If men would only do things instead of talking about them, the army would soon be organized."



Paul Brothers, New York.

GENERAL WOOD, WITH HIS WIFE AND SON.

That night the telegraph carried to Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Indian Territory the compact instructions that in five days made possible the organization of the Rough Riders and in twenty-one witnessed their actual mobilization at San Antonio, Texas.

Let me give you a few facts that show how this miracle was achieved. They are important. Not only do they bear directly upon the problem of the National Defense, but they throw a clear light on the character of Leonard Wood, American.

First take the matter of uniforms. Every army depot in the United States was in a great turmoil to meet the altogether unexpected demand for clothes.

"We can not supply your regiment," said the quartermaster-general to Wood.

"Then our men will wear the ordinary brown army canvas working clothes," was the instantaneous reply. And they did.

Thus expediency was the mother of comfort, because the brown clothes were far more serviceable in the tropical climate than the regulation blue.

Then there was the matter of rifles. All the other volunteer regiments had to take the old-fashioned Springfield. Wood wanted his men to have the army Krag, and he got them. Why? Because he knew where they were, and *how* to get them.

Still a third instance: Wood realized

From Bigelow Photo Co., Plattsburg, N. Y.

A PAIR OF REMARKABLE MEN, WHOSE CAREERS HAVE BEEN CLOSELY ENTWINED IN ACTION AND HISTORY.

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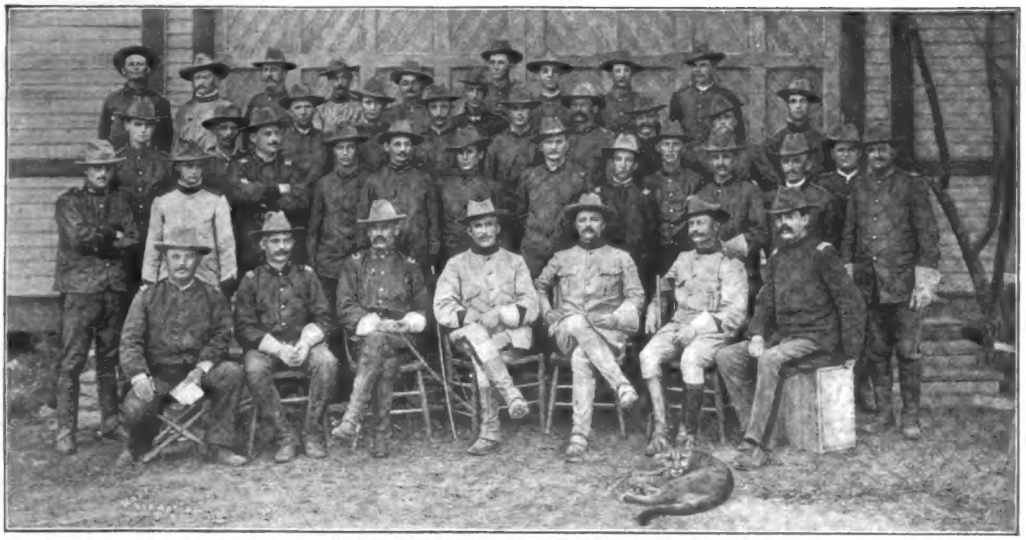

LEONARD WOOD AND THE ROUGH RIDERS, AT SAN ANTONIO IN 1898—A HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED PHOTOGRAPH.

that his motley command of college men, cow-punchers, border marshals, and Wall Street brokers could not learn how to use a saber in a short time; he knew that the most effective steel weapon for close fighting was the machete. Scarcely a thousand people in the United States had ever heard of this implement, yet Wood was able to equip his regiment with them for the reason that he had heard of a firm in Connecticut that was turning them out for cutting Cuban cane, and he requisitioned their product. Once more he was prepared. It is the Wood way which always finds a way.

When the Rough Riders steamed out of Tampa Harbor on June 13, 1898, Leonard Wood was still practically unknown save to a small army circle and to official Washington life. Less than a month later he had fought his way to a brigadier-generalship of volunteers; on July 19 he was Governor-General of the City of Santiago, and the smallest hamlet in the United States was familiar with his doings. Before the year which marked the overthrow of Spanish dominion in the West had passed he wore the sash of a major-general.

Never was military rise so swift. And the amazing thing was that the young doctor who had achieved so much had not yet turned his thirty-eighth year.

Wood the soldier became Wood the administrator. He faced a proposition that would have staggered most men. Siege-scarred and still reeling from assault, Santiago was a charnel-house. Thousands lay dead or dying; the streets reeked with filth; hunger vied with disease to complete the almost utter prostration. More than this, prejudice, suspicion, habit—all the hideous aftermath of generations of despotic rule—had to be combated. Yet Wood, ruling as benevolent dictator, brought order and cleanliness out of vileness and stagnation.

His methods were a revelation. Accustomed to Spanish officials laden with lace and luxury, the spectacle of this quiet-voiced, eagle-eyed doctor-soldier who moved about fearless and unafraid, wearing a simple khaki uniform and never attended by more than one aid, was a distinct shock to Santiago. He poked into filthy dungeons, dragged out political prisoners, held impromptu courts in areaways, and sent unfortunates on their way rejoicing and calling him blessed. He fearlessly went into the yellow-fever wards of the hospitals, and himself tested whether or not inmates of insane asylums were to remain behind iron bars. He paid the penalty of this defiance of death by having a very severe attack of yellow fever. He became lawmaker, judge, controller, teacher. He placated the most powerful and astute of clerical autocracies, established schools and hospitals, and constructed roads and waterworks. In short, he made Santiag a fit place to live and work in.

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His courage won where diplomacy failed. Once an excited Cuban mob gathered in front of the Spanish Casino and threatened to storm it because some Spaniards were hiding up-stairs. Armed only with a riding-crop, and attended by a single Cuban soldier, Wood walked straight into the crowd and dispersed it single-handed. Then he said in Spanish:

"The first man who tries to attack this place will be shot dead."

In five minutes the street was as clear as if a pestilence had been announced.

And speaking of pestilence brings me to a great glory of the Wood régime. It was due to his inspiring leadership that the conquering hand of science was laid on dread yellow fever. It was here that his old medical training was invaluable. It enabled him to appreciate and remedy conditions, and above all to place a true value on Reed's great work which proved that the plague was spread by mosquitoes. Wood authorized the historic experiments on human beings which confirmed the Reed theory. Armed with the results of these researches, he developed sanitary surveys and reforms until Cuba became one of the healthiest countries in the world.

In Santiago, Wood first carried out successfully an administrative policy which he once summed up to me in this unconventional fashion: "I insisted on letting the Cubans do their own rat-killing." By this he meant that he had always found it a good plan to let Greek fight Greek. For example, when he first went to Santiago the whole province was bandit-ridden. To have made American troops kill the bandits in cold blood would have created bad feeling, so he established a Rural Guard which made short shrift of their outlawed brethren. In December, 1899, Wood was made Military Governor of the entire island. In the eastern provinces peace and order reigned. A school system, courts, and public works were in full swing. One little incident will show the man's attitude toward his responsibilities. When he went to Washington to confer with Secretary of War Root, he paid his respects to President McKinley, who said:

"What can I do for you, General Wood?"

"Only this," was the reply: "Give me your full support so long as you can trust me. When you can not do this, get rid of me."

At Havana, in the old Spanish palace, he did for the whole island what he had done for Santiago. From Weyler's chair—seat of Cuban frightfulness—he made democracy grow where once a pitiless tyranny obtained. He reconstructed the judiciary, set up a far-reaching school system, reorganized finance and transportation, put stability and integrity into commercial enterprise, and the fear of God and law into the heart of every man. He chaperoned the Cuban Constitutional Convention, and no phase of his regeneration of Cuba was more difficult or significant than his work for the adoption of the Platt amendment which restrains the infant republic's borrowings, maintains her sanitary standards, and keeps her under the tutelage of Uncle Sam.

When, on that sunny day in May, 1902, the American flag was hauled down in the Grand Plaza in Havana and General Wood formally turned over the island, whose rebirth he had attended, to its own people, now clean, free, and linked to the world's brotherhood of democracies, he had reached a point in his career at which many men would have been content to pause. With him, however, the goal of To-day is merely the stepping-stone to the Effort of To-morrow. And To-morrow dawned full of thrill and movement.

With Sword and Bolo

AFTER his retirement from Cuba, General Wood was sent to Europe to attend the German maneuvers. Here he first met the Kaiser, who conceived a strong liking for the brilliant young American general with whose exploits he was familiar. On this mission, the American contingent, which included Generals Young and Corbin, fraternized with the English mission headed by Lord Roberts and including General John French and General Ian Hamilton, all of whom were to play such important and dramatic parts in the Great War.

When Wood returned to Washington, he was a general without a job; but he was not to escape the unrest that had marked him for its own, for Fate registered again. The spectacled and strenuous personage whom Wood had met at the Lowndes dinner and who had followed him through the Cuban jungle under a rain of steel, had become President of the United States. Of course

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Roosevelt and Wood saw a great deal of each other.

One afternoon they were fencing in the White House library. During a brief rest Roosevelt said: "I have been wondering whom I could send to the Philippines. There is some rough and important work to be done out there."

"Why not send me?" asked Wood.

"Bully!" responded Roosevelt. "Go over and see Root about it to-night."

Wood was soon on his way to the Far East, going by way of the Suez Canal. In Egypt he tarried for two weeks with his fellow regenerator, the late Lord Cromer. That worker of colonial miracles is said once to have expressed the regret that he could not be succeeded by the type of man that Wood represented.

It is characteristic of Wood that he drew the most hazardous post in the Philippines. He was assigned to the command of the Military Department of Mindanao and was commissioned governor of the Moro Province, fiercest of all the island bailiwicks. While organized resistance in a large way to American rule had subsided, the area immediately under Wood's control was alive with sporadic fighting of the most vicious and difficult sort.

But before he faced the steel of Moro bolo and sniper, Wood went up against an ordeal in some respects more difficult. The fame of his sensational rise had preceded him to the Islands. The friend of three successive Presidents, it was natural that officers and men should regard him as a successful courtier who had advanced through influence. Thus suspicion, even hostility, met him. But it did not last long. Wood outmarched, outsuffered, and outfought the hardiest regular of his command. He sent no one where he would not and did not go himself. The merest contact with him dispelled doubt, while comradeship in trench and trail won blind loyalty and devotion.

In the savage-ridden stronghold that he had come to rule, Wood knew the path to peace had to be cleaved with hand of iron. He had not Cubans to deal with this time. The Moros were the most bloodthirsty of the Filipino natives. In the back country among the mountains were head-hunters. The Moros had the fierce fanaticism of the Mohammedan; they regarded the white man and his institutions as intrusions to be put down by every device known to savage warfare.

The Cuban jungle-fighting was a spring-time frolic compared with the guerrilla warfare of the Moro hills and swamps. Wood and his command were practically under arms for a year and half, and in the field most of the time. For months he was almost continuously under fire.

Once in the Lake Lanao campaign his interpreter wandered from the trail into a bog and was instantly surrounded by Moro warriors. Always ahead with his men, Wood dashed in to his rescue and found him with emptied revolvers. Meanwhile the savages leaped into a dugout and tried to escape. By this time several troopers had come up, whereupon the general seized a rifle and, coolly kneeling in the mud, emptied the magazine, killing a Moro with every shot. It was this kind of performance that made his men adore him.

As you analyze Wood's exploits in the Philippines, you discover that all he achieved there, as elsewhere, is simply the result of systematic preparation and fitness to meet the emergency. More than once he blocked savage cunning with his knowledge and foresight, as in the following instance:

On one occasion he received a delegation of Mohammedan polygamists who had come to plead for their harems and justify slave-holding at the same time. The Sultan of Jolo, who sat cross-legged on his rug, spoke up:

"The Prophet has said that a man may have many wives. It is so ordained in the Koran."

"That is quite true," replied General Wood. "I have read it there myself." All the Mohammedans looked up with pleasure and satisfaction.

"But," continued the general, "the Prophet also says that 'a wise man will be content with one.'"

There was nothing more to be said, and the Moros left, stunned into silence and obedience by what they believed to be the uncanny wizardry of the Big White Chief who was as wise as he was brave.

No phase of General Wood's Philippine campaign was more colorful than his conquest of the Sultan of Sulu. That astute slave-dealer and polygamist, entrenched behind a stronghold and flanked by savage retainers, was a far more dangerous

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individual than he appeared to be in the comic opera that bore his name. But Wood broke his power and some of his savage practises. Nor was this performance without its element of humor.

The sultan had the power of life and death and exercised it so indiscriminately that the general deposed him as a ruler of his principality. He left him, however, as head of the Mohammedan church. When the most accomplished lady-killer of the Far East heard that his suzerainty existed only in spiritual matters, he said to Wood:

"But how about selecting wives when I see women that please me?"

A GROUP OF MOROS SURRENDERING TO GENERAL WOOD DURING THE TARACA EXPEDITION.

"All that is done away with," answered Wood.

"Then," pleaded the sultan, "what is the good of being a sultan?"

"That is for you, not for me, to decide," was the answer.

Under Wood's quiet but forceful dominion the sultan accepted the situation, saw the evil of his ways, and became a constructive and useful influence throughout the province.

The taming of the Moros was attended by one dramatic incident which once more brought Wood into the arena of fierce controversy. I cite it not so much as a part of this man's remarkable record in the Far East as because it discloses a characteristic which runs like gold through his makeup. The depredations of Moro pirates and slave-dealers on the island of Jolo made it necessary to use swift and stern measures. The outlaws took refuge in a huge crater on Mount Dajo. Colonel Duncan commanded the expedition sent against them, and General Wood went along with the column. The night before the assault he slept on the ground with the men, using his saddle for a pillow. He scaled the hill during the action, but left the control of the troops to Duncan, desiring that he get full credit for the victory.

In this fight, as many people may recall, a number of native women were killed, and the hue and cry usually emanating from ignorance or misinformation sprang up against Wood. He was labeled a blood-thirsty monster. As a matter of fact, in the engagement the women were armed as well as the men, and during the mêlée of battle it was impossible to distinguish sex. When the War Department cabled Wood, asking for particulars, he replied declaring his belief that American soldiers had not killed Moro women or children except unavoidably in close action. The important declaration in this message, however—the sentence that shows the real man and soldier who was behind it—was this:

"I assume entire responsibility for the action of the troops in every particular."

In this sentence you see the thing that bound his men to Wood with bonds of steel. He not only stood with them in the firing-line but he fought their battles everywhere.

When General Wood left Mindanao to become Commander of the Department of

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the Philippines at Manila, he left behind him a perpetual monument to his administrative genius. In less than three years he had converted a hotbed of fanatical revolt, of slavery and polygamy and feudal warfare—into a land of order and plenty, with schoolhouses where the little brown kiddies were taught out of books printed in Arabic characters; where women had ceased to be chattels and were beginning to command the respect due their sex; where revenue succeeded ransom.

Wood the Soldier had again made good as Wood the Administrator.

At Manila he found himself in command of nearly twenty thousand troops, committed to a purely military task. He revised the whole defensive scheme of the island and initiated the fight to shift the strategic base from Subig Bay to Manila Bay, and eventually succeeded. He likewise extended the defensive resources of the Department to the limit. Those were the days when the match was perilously near the powder-train that would have let go the explosion with Japan, and it required all the tact and diplomacy that were part of the Wood equipment to deal with the delicate situation.

In developing the defensive side of the army in the East, Wood was once more the pioneer, because he brought about a revolution in bayonet practise. It was then regarded as an absurd waste of effort. The European War has proved that cold steel at close quarters is still a necessary if unpleasant feature of modern fighting.

In 1908 General Wood returned home to become Commanding General of the Department of the East, with headquarters at Governor's Island, New York—oddly enough, his first American command since those obscure eighties when he led his cavalrymen against the Apaches across the Mexican border. This post, however, had a larger significance than merely recording his station as ranking general of the army.

From a battered desk in the old windswept building on the "Island," to military memory dear, where Hancock, Meade, McDowell, Miles, and other luminaries ruled the destinies of the Army of the East, Wood now launched the great preparedness drive. No panic patriotism stirred him on. Fresh from an experience in the Philippines that had proved to him how sensitive a thing international relation is, he began to impress upon his countrymen the urgent need of making ready to meet the contingency of war whenever and wherever it came.

Nor did he deal in theory. Glaring weaknesses in the structure of national protection were uncovered. For one thing, he instituted the Massachusetts maneuvers, the first extensive and uncontrolled field operations to be held in this country after the European plan. In this make-believe war, in which nearly fifteen thousand militiamen took part, he introduced the novelty of a water attack on Boston, using military transports as warships.

General Wood here proved conclusively that coast defenses, however powerful, are absolutely useless without a mobile army behind them. To use the epigrammatic speech of which he is a master: "Coast defense is like a giant in armor with his feet shackled: he is only effective within the reach of his club."

Upon his retirement from the Department of the East, Wood was sent as special ambassador to Argentina to celebrate the centenary of Argentine independence. What might have been an ordinary official junket turned out in this case to be a journey fraught with the utmost significance. At the head of the German Embassy was the battle-scarred old warrior, Field-Marshal von der Goltz, for years military mentor of the Crown Prince. He sought out at once the eminent young American general. They had many talks about national service.

Back in his own fatherland, the Prussian chief had espoused the doctrine of compulsory training which combines soldierly efficiency with an economic preparedness of the highest order.

Wood came back to America more than ever impressed with the nation-wide value of a national service that would embody all the virtue of the German plan without its stern, iron-handed militaristic features.

Circumstances again gave him a weapon with which to wage a war to prepare for war, because no sooner had he landed on his native soil than he became Chief of Staff. The time was ripe for preparedness education. Already the spark that was to set Europe aflame had flared up at Agadir. Wood knew, as few men knew, what was inevitable.

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All the while America slumbered. Like a monstrous ostrich, she hid her head in the sands of fancied security, content with her aloofness. Wood set out to destroy the illusion of isolation. He predicted then, what Zeppelin and submarine demonstrated later on to England and what was hammered home to us so ruthlessly by the operation of the *U-53* along our own coast—that the reaches of the broad Atlantic are no longer a great national barrier to keep out the invader.

Wood became the inspired Preacher of Preparedness. He took for his text the Swiss and Australian system of national service. His plea was for a systematic training of boys during school life, to be followed by an intensive instruction between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one, when business and domestic responsibility is at its minimum, and physical resiliency and power are at their maximum. How was he to get this message home?

"Since the bulwark of a nation lies in a citizenry trained to arms," said Wood to himself, "this training must begin with youth. Why not give the high-school and the college student an opportunity to mold the great idea of national defense into his mind along with academic studies?"

Out of this came the inspiration for the students' camps which really marked the first outpost of our preparedness highway. With a fine eye for sentiment and tradition General Wood held the first of these camps on Gettysburg battle-field—the Valhalla of American heroism. Here for the first time, and in a big, national way, the youth of the land got a test of soldier life.

They liked it so well and talked about it so much at home, that their fathers and uncles and elder brothers began to apply for similar service. To meet this demand Wood evolved the now celebrated Plattsburg idea, which established military training-camps for the systematic instruction of men to qualify as reserve officers in emergency. At the initial camp for men which gave the system its title, the attendance leaped from twenty-five hundred in 1915 to more than fifteen thousand in 1916.

From Chief of Staff Wood passed once more to the command of the Department of the East, and with him traveled the fighting spirit for national defense. While he was in the throes of his campaign came the mobilization of the state troops on the Mexican border. Under the Hay Bill, on which the President's signature was still damp, the militia became Federalized. Seventy-two per cent. of the National Guardsmen of the country are in the Department of the East. General Wood's office at Governor's Island became the nerve-center of a mighty movement.

From a dozen states came clamorous appeals for supplies, equipment, and transportation. The emergency proved precisely what Wood had so long contended. The demand exceeded the supply. Yet out of all this disorder he evolved system.

He sat at his desk nineteen hours out of every twenty-four, galvanizing inert adjutant-generals and injecting dynamic force into all the hurried preparation. He ripped up red tape and sacrificed routine to action. If a regiment needed horses, he bought them on his own responsibility; he was no respecter of pride or precedent. In short, he got results and got them quickly.

This revelation of inadequacy in equipment which delayed a mere display of arms against a disorganized and revolution-ridden country like Mexico, was fresh fuel to heap upon the fires of education that he was kindling everywhere. From rostrum, pulpit, and banquet-table he made his fervent appeal. He proved to be as convincing an orator as he was a governor and soldier. He adapted his message to the school-boy with the same force that he drove it into the banking group. A twentieth-century Paul Revere, traveling in train and motor instead of on horseback, he carried the warning of a peril that lurked beyond the uncertain frontiers of to-morrow.

He revealed a gift of striking expression that was a revelation even to his oldest and closest associates. To the procrastinators, committed to the policy of drift in national preparedness, he hurled this impressive warning:

"There are many things man can not buy, and one of them is Time. It takes time to organize and prepare. Time will only be found in periods of peace. Modern war gives no time for preparation. Its approach is that of the avalanche and not of the glacier."

And then came February third!

I KNOW of no better single sentence that sums up the character of General Wood than a remark he once made to me. I

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asked him casually what had been the driving force behind all his achievement and quick as a flash he said:

"Do things and don't talk about them."

This is really the mainspring of his action. You find a further revelation of his method and the reason why he has traveled so far, in another pithy statement he made on the same occasion. This was what he said:

THE SARGENT PORTRAIT

"Never miss an opportunity to do something. It is better to be a live failure than a dead success."

The advice that he has always laid down for his officers is equally illuminating. Summed up in a paragraph it is this:

"Always volunteer for service, because you never know where it will lead."

Consciously or unconsciously he was merely talking out loud about himself. Back in those early Indian fighting days on the border, it was Wood who always said, no matter what the emergency, "I'll go." If a horse-thief had to be run down, he was first in the saddle after him; if a courier had to be sent on a hazardous mission, he was on the job.

In view of his sensational rise, the charge has often been made that Leonard Wood is a Man of Opportunity. As a matter of fact, when you have analyzed all that he has done, you discover that Wood not only created every opportunity that sped him on, but was ready for it when it developed.

General Wood shares to-day a curious kinship with a great English soldier, the late and always to be lamented Earl Roberts. It was that gallant and unconquerable little man who first exposed the unreadiness of his country to meet the war that he believed would eventually come. He was met with indifference and even ridicule. His stirring slogan, "Get Ready!" fell on deaf or doubting ears.

But when the German avalanche crashed into civilization and the Mailed Fist smote an innocent land, Great Britain found out to her sorrow that old "Bobs" had been right, after all. He died amid the roar of the great guns for whose existence he had begged. They came too late to save the peace of Europe, but to-day with every roar of their monstrous mouths they echo his plea.

Will history repeat itself with Wood and his doctrine of Defense?

In the last analysis, all that General Wood has lived and preached and achieved is merely democracy translated into terms of civil and soldierly performance.

This is the New Nationalism whose highest inspiration lies in a career like that of Leonard Wood. To know it is to hear a trumpet-call to duty and service.

It is Americanism itself.

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AMERICA'S PART

By LORD NORTHCLIFFE

On February 3d, the day of the break with Germany, we cabled Isaac F. Marcosson, EVERYBODY'S special representative abroad, to ask Lord Northcliffe this question: "What part do you think America will play if she enters the war?"

Here is the answer received by cable as the last pages of the Magazine are going to press:

EARLY in the war I pointed out that "if it is a question of soldiers, the mighty Republic might make up its mind to clear Belgium of the Prussians and their reign of terror."

I then presumed that in view of the danger to American national honour you would have been prepared; and that by the time you would participate, you could have thrown a million men into the field. Unfortunately, the same sort of arguments that prevented our having an army ready in 1914 have left you helpless in that respect in 1917, so at the moment Belgium, great as are her needs, must rely upon the French and ourselves until you are ready.

There is some form of preparedness which can be quickly attained and for which the American temperament is entirely suitable. Two of the successes of the war have been the aeroplane and the destroyer. The American airmen with the French and British armies have proved that this individual form of fighting is particularly suited to your people. If you start air-schools in localities as free from wind and gales as possible, you can quickly train flying men. Some of the best of ours are mere boys, from seventeen to twenty-two. You could easily get the models of the latest British and French aeroplanes, and with your unrivaled manufacturing facilities you could multiply engines by the thousand.

Our navy believes that the work of your naval officers and destroyers is of first quality. Our people, while admiring certain qualities of German seamanship, consider that their destroyer work lacks individuality, quickness, and aggressiveness. The destroyer is one of the best enemies of the submarine, and is also useful in many other ways. Under pressure of war, complete destroyers are turned out in this country in a few months. You have steel in abundance. You have excellent mechanics. There is no reason why you should not multiply by hundreds your destroyer fleet.

You could help the alliance by assisting Great Britain in its great task of financing Russia, Belgium, Italy, Serbia, Rumania, Montenegro, and to a lesser extent France. You could also do the feeding of some of those countries now almost entirely in our hands. At present you are doing a goodly share in Belgium, but not nearly enough by comparison with France and England.

I am one of those who have not desired American intervention in the war. We can finish this thing ourselves. The Germans want you in because they believe that you are supplying us with the major part of our munitions—which is quite untrue—and because they believe German influence in the United States will help them at the Peace Table.

If you do come in, you will find that getting a democracy into war shape is not the easy task it is when war is controlled by one man or a small group of men. You have found that out already in your handling of the Mexican scrap. You could learn a great deal by studying the methods of the Canadians.

One thing to bear in mind always is that every detail to-day is on ten times the scale of previous wars. This applies to everything, from artillery to ambulances. If you enter the war, I look with confidence to developments of American ingenuity, to the full force of American vitality, and the great weight of American capital.

But, writing this on February third, I am hoping you will keep out. France and Great Britain, with Russia, have got Prussia put, and we mean to keep the monster put.

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LONG LIVE THE KING!

ITS SHOE-BUTTON EYES LOOKED GLAZED WITH SLEEP.

by Mary Roberts Rinehart

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ARTHUR E. BECHER

STORY OF THE FIRST INSTALMENT

AFFAIRS at the Court of Livonia are not happy. The King, old and frail, has not more than a year to live. The heir apparent, Prince Ferdinand William Otto, is a boy of ten. There are stirrings of revolution all through the kingdom. A secret Terrorist society, which had assassinated Otto's father, has reorganized and grown powerful. So when one afternoon Otto runs away from an opera that bores him, the palace is, naturally, in a panic. Otto meanwhile has a glorious time. He meets an American boy, Bobby Thorpe, whose father is manager of a scenic railway in the park, and to Otto's wild delight Bobby takes him for a ride. It is not till eight o'clock that the Crown Prince, very dirty and disheveled, returns to the palace. That night the King and his Chancellor, Mettlich, confer over the boy's danger, and end by appointing Lieutenant Nicholas Larisch to have constant charge of him. This arrangement appeals to Otto, who adores "Nikky," and also to Otto's cousin Hedwig, next in line after Otto, who is inclined to adore "Nikky" herself. But other plans are being made for Hedwig. Mettlich has convinced the King that the safety of the country demands an alliance between Livonia and her neighbor Karnia: Hedwig must marry Karl, King of Karnia, whom she loathes. The Chancellor unfolds this plan to Hedwig's mother, the Archduchess Annunciata, and wins her grudging consent. But neither of them reckons with the Countess Loschek, lady in waiting to Annunciata, who has been listening to their interview through a closed door.

CHAPTER SEVEN (Continued)

TEA at the palace, until the old King had taken to his bed, had been the one cheerful hour of the day. The entire suite gathered in one of the salons, and remained standing until the King's entrance. After that, formality ceased. Groups formed, footmen in plush with white wigs passed trays of cakes and sandwiches and tiny gilt cups of exquisite tea. The Court, so to speak, removed its white gloves, and was noisy and informal. True, at dinner again ceremony

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and etiquette would reign. The march into the dining-hall between rows of bowing servants, the set conversation, led by the King, the long and tedious courses, the careful watch for precedence—that was dinner at the palace.

But now all that was changed. The King did not leave his apartment. Annunciata occasionally took tea with the suite, but, glad for an excuse, left the Court to dine without her. Sometimes for a half-hour she lent her royal if somewhat indifferently attired presence to the salon afterward, where for thirty minutes or so she moved from group to group, exchanging a few more or less gracious words. But such times were rare. The Archduchess, according to Court gossip, had "slumped."

To Hedwig the change had been a relief. The entourage, with its gossip, its small talk, its liaisons, excited in her only indifference and occasional loathing. Not that her short life had been without its affairs. She was too lovely for that. But they had touched her only faintly.

On the day of the Chancellor's visit to her mother she went to tea in the schoolroom. She came in glowing from a walk, with the jacket of her dark velvet suit thrown open, and a bunch of lilies-of-the-valley tucked in her belt. Tea had already come, and Captain Larisch, holding his cup, was standing by the table. The Crown Prince, who was allowed only one cup, was having a second of hot water and milk, equal parts, and sweetened.

Hedwig slipped out of her jacket and drew off her gloves. She had hardly glanced at Nikky, although she knew quite well every motion he had made since she entered. "I am famished!" she said, and proceeded to eat very little and barely touch the tea. "Please don't go, Miss Braithwaite. And now, how is everything?"

Followed a long half-hour, in which the Crown Prince talked mostly of the Land of Delight and the American boy. Miss Braithwaite, much indulged by long years of service, crocheted, and Nikky Larisch, from the embrasure of a window, watched the little group. In reality he watched Hedwig, all his humble, boyish heart in his eyes.

After a time Hedwig slipped the lilies out of her belt and placed them in a glass of water.

"They are thirsty, poor things," she said to Otto. Only—and here was a strange thing, if she were really sorry for them—one of the stalks fell to the floor, and she did not trouble to pick it up. Nikky retrieved it, and pretended to place it with the others. But in reality he had palmed it quite neatly, and a little later he pocketed it. Still later, he placed it in his prayer-book.

The tea-table became rather noisy. The room echoed with laughter. Even Miss Braithwaite was compelled to wipe her eyes over some of Nikky's sallies, and the Crown Prince was left quite gasping. Nikky was really in his best form, being most unreasonably happy, and Hedwig, looking much taller than in her boyish riding-clothes—Hedwig was fairly palpitating with excitement.

Nikky was a born mimic. First he took off the King's Council, one by one. Then in an instant he was Napoleon, which was easy, of course; and the next second, with one of the fur tails which had come unfastened from Hedwig's muff, he had become a pirate, with the tail for a great mustache. One of the very best things he did, however, was to make a widow's cap out of a tea-napkin, and surmount it with a tiny coronet, which was really Hedwig's bracelet. He put it on, drew down his upper lip, and puffed his cheeks, and there was Queen Victoria of England to the life.

Hedwig was so delighted with this that she made him sit down, and draped one of Miss Braithwaite's shawls about his shoulders. It was difficult to look like Queen Victoria under the circumstances, with her small hands deftly draping and smoothing. But Nikky did very well.

It was just as Hedwig was tucking the shawl about his neck to hide the collar of his tunic, and Miss Braithwaite was looking a trifle offended, because she considered the memory of Queen Victoria not to be trifled with, and just as Nikky took a fresh breath and puffed out his cheeks again, that the Archduchess came in.

She entered unannounced, save by a jingle of chains, and surveyed the room with a single furious glance. Queen Victoria's cheeks collapsed and the coronet slid slightly to one side. Then Nikky rose and jerked off the shawl and bowed. Every one looked rather frightened, except the Crown Prince. In a sort of horrible silence he advanced and kissed Annunciata's hand.

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"So this is what you are doing," observed her Royal Highness to Hedwig. "In this—this undignified manner you spend your time!"

"It is very innocent fun, mother."

For that matter, there was nothing very dignified in the scene that followed. The Archduchess dismissed the governess and the Crown Prince, quite as if he had been an ordinary child, and naughty at that. Miss Braithwaite looked truculent. After all, the heir to the throne is the heir to the throne and should have the privilege of his own study. But Hedwig gave her an appealing glance, and she went out, closing the door with what came dangerously near being a slam.

SHE ENTERED UNANNOUNCED, SAVE BY A JINGLE OF CHAINS, AND SURVEYED THE ROOM WITH A SINGLE FURIOUS GLANCE.

The Archduchess surveyed the two remaining culprits with a terrible gaze. "Now," she said, "how long have these ridiculous performances been going on?"

"Mother!" said Hedwig.

"Answer me."

"The question is absurd. There was no harm in what we were doing. It amused Otto. He has few enough pleasures. Thanks to all of us, he is very lonely."

"And since when have you assumed the responsibility for his upbringing?"

"I remember my own dreary childhood," said Hedwig stiffly.

The Archduchess turned on her furiously. "More and more," she said, "as you grow up, Hedwig, you remind me of your unfortunate father. You have the same lack of dignity, the same—" she glanced at Nikky—"the same common tastes, the same habit of choosing strange society, of forgetting your rank."

Hedwig was scarlet, but Nikky had gone pale. As for the Archduchess, her cameos were rising and falling stormily. With hands that shook, Hedwig picked up her jacket and hat. Then she moved toward the door.

"Perhaps you are right, mother," she said, "but I hope I shall never have the bad taste to speak ill of the dead." Then she went out.

The scene between the Archduchess and Nikky began in a storm and ended in a sort of hopeless quiet. Miss Braithwaite had withdrawn to her sitting-room, but even there she could hear the voice of Annunciata, rasping and angry.

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It was very clear to Nikky from the beginning that the Archduchess's wrath was not for that afternoon alone. And in his guilty young mind rose various memories, all infinitely dear, all infinitely, incredibly reckless—other frolics around the tea-table, rides in the park, lessons in the riding-school. Very soon he was confessing them all, in reply to sharp questions. When the tablet of his sins was finally uncovered, the Archduchess was less angry and a great deal more anxious. Hedwig free was a problem. Hedwig in love with this dashing boy was a greater one.

"Of one thing I must assure your Highness," said Nikky. "These—these meetings have been of my seeking."

"The Princess requires no defense, Captain Larisch."

That put him back where he belonged, and Annunciata did a little thinking, while Nikky went on, in his troubled way, running his fingers through his hair until he looked rather like an uneasy but ardent-eyed porcupine. He acknowledged that these meetings had meant much to him, everything to him, he would confess, but he had never dared to hope. He had always thought of her Royal Highness as the granddaughter of his King. He had never spoken a word that he need regret. Annunciata listened, and took his measure shrewdly. He was the sort of young fool, she told herself, who would sacrifice himself and crucify his happiness for his country. It was on just such shoulders as his that the throne was upheld. His loyalty was more to be counted on than his heart.

She changed her tactics adroitly, sat down, even softened her voice. "I have been emphatic, Captain Larisch," she said, "because, as I think you know, things are not going too well with us. To help the situation, certain plans are being made. I will be more explicit. A marriage is planned for the Princess Hedwig, which will assist us all. It is"—she hesitated imperceptibly—"the King's dearest wish."

Horror froze on Nikky's face. But he bowed.

"After what you have told me, I shall ask your cooperation," said Annunciata smoothly. "While there are some of us who deplore the necessity, still—it exists. And an alliance with Karnia——"

"Karnia!" cried Nikky, violating all ceremonial, of course. "But surely——!"

The Archduchess rose and drew herself to her full height. "I have given you confidence for confidence, Captain Larisch," she said coldly. "The Princess Hedwig has not yet been told. We shall be glad of your assistance when that time comes. It is possible that it will not come. In case it does, we shall count on you."

Nikky bowed deeply as she went out, bowed, with death in his eyes.

And thus it happened that Captain Nicholas Larisch, aide-de-camp to his Royal Highness the Crown Prince Ferdinand William Otto, and of no other particular importance, was informed of the Princess Hedwig's projected marriage before she was. And not only informed of it, but committed to forward it, if he could!

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Letter

THE Countess Loschek was alone. Alone and storming. She had sent her maid away with a sharp word, and now she was pacing the floor.

Hedwig, of all people!

She hated her. She had always hated her. For her youth, first; later, when she saw how things were going, for the accident that had made her a granddaughter to the King.

And Karl.

Even this last June, when Karl had made his looked-for visit to the summer palace where the Court had been in residence, he had already had the thing in mind. Even when his arms had been about her, Olga Loschek, he had been looking over her shoulder, as it were, at Hedwig. He had had it all in his wicked head, even then. For Karl was wicked. None would know it better than she, who was risking everything, life itself, for him. Wicked, ungrateful, and unscrupulous. She loathed him while she loved him.

The thing would happen. This was the way things were done in courts. An intimation from one side that a certain thing would be agreeable and profitable. A discussion behind closed doors. A reply that the intimation had been well received. Then the formal proposal, and its acceptance.

Hedwig would marry Karl. She might be troublesome, would indeed almost certainly be troublesome. Strangely enough,

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the Countess hated her the more for that. To value so lightly the thing for which Olga Loschek would have given her soul, this in itself was hateful. But there was more. The Countess saw much with her curiously wide, almost childishly bland eyes; it was only now that it occurred to her to turn what she knew of Hedwig and Nikky to account.

She stopped pacing the floor, and sat down. Suppose Hedwig and Nikky Larisch went away together? Hedwig, she felt, would have the courage even for that. That would stop things. But Hedwig did not trust her. And there was about Nikky a dog-like quality of devotion, which warned her that, the deeper his love for Hedwig, the more unlikely he would be to bring her to disgrace. Nikky might be difficult.

"The fool!" said the Countess, between her clenched teeth. To both the Archduchess Annunciata and her henchwoman, people were chiefly divided into three classes, fools, knaves, and themselves.

She must try for Hedwig's confidence, then. But Karl! How to reach him? Not with reproaches, not with anger. She knew her man well. To hold him off was the first thing. To postpone the formal proposal, and gain time. If the Chancellor had been right, and things were as bad as they appeared, the King's death would precipitate a crisis. Might, indeed, overturn the throne.

And Karl had changed. The old days when he loved trouble were gone. His thoughts, like all thoughts these days, she reflected contemptuously, were turned to peace, not to war. He was for beating his swords into plowshares, with a vengeance.

To hold him off, then. To gain time.

The King was very feeble. This affair of yesterday had told on him. The gossip of the Court was that the day had seen a change for the worse. His heart was centered on the Crown Prince.

Ah, here was another view-point. Suppose the Crown Prince had not come back? What would happen, with the King dead, and no king? Chaos, of course. A free hand to revolution. Hedwig fighting for her throne, and inevitably losing it. Then what about Karl and his dreams of peace?

But that was farther than she cared to go just then. She would finish certain work that she had set out to do, and then she was through. No longer would dread and terror grip her in the night hours.

But she would finish. Karl should never say she had failed him. In her new rage against him she was for cleaning the slate at once. She had in her possession papers for which he waited or pretended to wait: data secured by means she did not care to remember; plans and figures carefully compiled—a thousand deaths in one, if they were found on her. She would get them out of her hands at once.

It was still but little after five. She brought her papers together on her small mahogany desk, from such hiding-places as women know—the linings of perfumed sachets, the toes of small slippers, the secret pocket in a muff; and having locked her doors, put them in order. Her hands were trembling, but she worked skilfully. She was free until the dinner hour, but she had a great deal to do. The papers in order, she went to a panel in the wall of her dressing-room, and, sliding it aside, revealed the safe in which her jewels were kept. Not that her jewels were very valuable, but the safe was there, and she used it.

The palace, for that matter, was full of cunningly contrived hiding-places. Some, in times of stress, had held jewels. Others, rooms these, built in the stone walls and carefully mapped, had held even royal refugees themselves. The map was in the King's possession, and descended from father to son, a curious old paper, with two of the hidden rooms marked off in colored inks as closed. Closed, with strange secrets beyond, quite certainly.

The Countess took out a jewel-case, emptied it, lifted its chamois cushions, and took out a small book. It was an indifferent hiding-place, but long immunity had made her careless. Referring to the book, she wrote a letter in code. It was, to all appearances, a friendly letter referring to a family in her native town, and asking that the recipient see that assistance be sent them before Thursday of the following week. The assistance was specified with much detail—at her expense to send so many blankets, so many loaves of bread, a long list. Having finished, she destroyed, by burning, a number of papers, watching until the last ash had turned from dull red to smoking gray. The code-book she hesitated over, but at last, with a shrug of her shoulders, she returned it to its hiding-place in the jewel-case.

Coupled with her bitterness was a sense

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of relief. Only when the papers were destroyed had she realized the weight they had been. She summoned Minna, her maid, and dressed for the street. Then,

THE CONCIERGE, A HUGE MAN, WAS AT THE STOVE MAKING GRAVY IN A FRYING-PAN.

Minna accompanying her, she summoned her carriage and went shopping.

She reached the palace again in time to dress for dinner. Somewhere on that excursion she had left the letter, to be sent to its destination over the border by special messenger that night.

Prince Ferdinand William Otto, at the moment of her return, was preparing for bed. At a quarter to seven he had risen, bowed to Miss Braithwaite, said good night, and disappeared toward his bedroom and his waiting valet. But a moment later he reappeared.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "but I think your watch is fast."

Miss Braithwaite consulted it. Then, rising, she went to the window and compared it with the moon-like face of the cathedral clock.

"There is a difference of five minutes," she conceded. "But I have no confidence in the cathedral clock. It needs oiling, probably. Besides, there are always pigeons sitting on the hands."

"May I wait for five minutes?"

"What could you do in five minutes?"

"Well," he suggested, rather pleadingly, "we might have a little conversation, if you are not too tired."

Miss Braithwaite sighed. It had been a long day and not a calm one, and conversation with his Highness meant questions, mostly.

"Very well," she said.

"I'm not at all sleepy," Prince Ferdinand William Otto observed, climbing on a chair. "I thought you might tell me about America. I'm awfully curious about America."

"I suppose you mean the United States."

"I'm not sure. It has New York in it, anyhow. They don't have kings, do they?"

"No," said Miss Braithwaite, shortly. She hated republics.

"What I wondered was," said Ferdinand William Otto, swinging his legs, "how they managed without a king. Who tells them

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what to do? I'm interested, because I met a boy yesterday who came from there, and he talked quite a lot about it. He was a very interesting boy."

Miss Braithwaite waived the matter of yesterday. "In a republic," she said, "the people think they can govern themselves. But they do it very badly. The average intelligence among people in the mass is always rather low."

"He said," went on his Royal Highness, pursuing a line of thought, "that the greatest man in the world was a man named Lincoln. But that he is dead. And he said that kings were nuisances, and didn't earn their bread and butter. Of course," Otto hastened to explain, "he didn't know that my grandfather is a king. After that, I didn't exactly like to tell him. It would have made him very uncomfortable." Here he yawned, but covered it with a polite hand, and Oskar, his valet, came to the doorway and stood waiting. He was a dignified person in a plum-colored livery, because the King considered black gloomy for a child.

The Crown Prince slipped to the floor, and stood with his feet rather wide apart, looking steadfastly at Miss Braithwaite. "I would like very much to see that boy again," he observed. "He was a nice boy, and very kind-hearted. If we could go to the scenic railway when we are out in the carriage, I—I'd enjoy it." He saw refusal in her face, for he added hurriedly, "Not to ride. I just want to look at it."

Miss Braithwaite was touched, but firm. She explained that it would be better if the Crown Prince did not see the boy again; and to soften the refusal, she reminded him that the American child did not like royalties, and that even to wave from his carriage with the gold wheels would therefore be a tactical error.

Prince Ferdinand William Otto listened, and Oskar waited. And something that had been joyous and singing in a small boy's heart was suddenly still.

"I had forgotten about that," he said. Then Miss Braithwaite rose, and the Prince put his heels together with a click, and bowed, as he had been taught to do.

"Good night," he said.

"Good night, your Highness," replied Miss Braithwaite.

At the door Prince Ferdinand William Otto turned and bowed again. Then he went out, and the door closed behind him.

He washed himself, with Oskar standing by, holding a great soft towel. Even the towels were too large. And he brushed his teeth, and had two drinks of water, because a stiffish feeling in his throat persisted. And at last he crawled up into the high bed that was so much too big for him, and had to crawl out again, because he had forgotten his prayers.

When everything was done, and the hour of putting out the light could no longer be delayed, he said good night to Oskar, who bowed. There was a great deal of bowing in Otto's world. Then, whisk! it was dark, with only the moon face of the cathedral clock for company. And as it was now twenty minutes past seven, the two hands drooped until it looked like a face with a cruel mouth, and was really very poor company.

Oskar, having bowed himself into the corridor and past the two sentries, reported to a very great dignitary across the hall that his Royal Highness the Crown Prince Ferdinand William Otto was in bed. And the dignitary had a chance to go away and get his dinner.

But alone in his great bed, the Crown Prince was shedding a few shamefaced tears. He was extremely ashamed of them. He felt that under no circumstances would his soldier father have behaved so. He reached out and secured one of the two clean folded handkerchiefs that were always placed on the bedside stand at night, and blew his nose very loudly. But he could not sleep.

He gave Miss Braithwaite time to go to her sitting-room, and for eight o'clock to pass, because once every hour, all night, a young gentleman of the court, appointed for this purpose and dubbed a "wet-nurse" by jealous comrades, cautiously opened his door and made a stealthy circuit of the room, to see that all was well.

The Crown Prince got up. He neglected to put on his bedroom slippers, of course, and in his bare feet he padded across the room to the study door. It was not entirely dark. A night-light burned there. It stood on a table directly under the two crossed swords. Beneath the swords, in a burnt-wood frame, were the pictures of his father and mother. Hedwig had given him a wood-burning outfit at Christmas, and he had done the work himself. It consisted of the royal arms, somewhat out of drawing

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and not exactly in the center of the frame, and a floral border of daisies, extremely geometrical, because he had drawn them in first with a compass.

The boy, however, gave the pictures only a hasty glance and proceeded, in a business-like manner, to carry a straight chair to the cabinet. On the top shelf sat the old cloth dog. Its shoe-button eyes looked glazed with sleep, but its ears were quite alert. Very cautiously the Crown Prince unlocked the door, stepped precariously to the lower shelf of the cabinet, hung there by one royal hand, and lifted the dog down.

At nine o'clock the wet-nurse took off his sword in another room and leaned it against a chair. Then he examined his revolver, in accordance with a formula prescribed by the old King. Then he went in and examined the room with a flashlight, and listened to the Crown Prince's breathing. He had been a croupy baby. And, at last, he turned the flashlight on to the bed. A pair of shoe-button eyes stared at him from the pillow.

"Well, I'm damned," said the wet-nurse. And went out, looking thoughtful.

CHAPTER NINE

A Fine Night

IN A shop where, that afternoon, the Countess had purchased some Lyons silks, one of the clerks, Peter Niburg, was free at last. At seven o'clock, having put away the last rolls of silk on the shelves behind him, and covered them with calico to keep off the dust; having given a final glance of disdain at the clerk in the linens, across; having reached under the counter for his stiff black hat of good quality and his silver-topped cane; having donned the hat and hung the stick to his arm with two swaggering gestures; having prepared his offensive, so to speak, he advanced.

Between Peter Niburg and Herman Spier of the linens, was a feud. Its source, in the person of a pretty cashier, had gone, but the feud remained. It was of the sort that smiles with the lips and scowls with the eyes, that speaks pleasantly quite awful things, although it was Peter Niburg who did most of the talking. Herman Spier was a moody individual, given to brooding. A man who stood behind his linens, and hated with his head down.

And he hated Peter. God, how he hated him! The cashier was gone, having married a restaurant keeper, and already she waxed fat. But Herman's hatred grew with the days. And business being bad, much of the time he stood behind his linens and thought about a certain matter, which was this:

How did Peter Niburg do it?

They were paid the same scant wage. Each Monday they stood together, Peter smiling and he frowning, and received into open palms exactly enough to live on, without extras. And each Monday Peter pocketed his cheerfully, and went back to his post, twirling his mustache as though all the money of the realm jingled in his trousers.

To accept the inevitable, to smile over one's poverty, that is one thing. But there was more to it. Peter made his money go amazingly far. It was Peter, for instance, who on name-days had been able to present the little cashier with a nosegay. Which had, by the way, availed him nothing against the delicatessen offerings of the outside rival. When, the summer before, the American scenic railway had opened to the public, with much crossing of flags, the national emblem and the Stars and Stripes, it was Peter who had invited the lady to an evening of thrills on that same railway at a definite sum per thrill. Nay, more, as Herman had seen with his own eyes, taken her afterward to a coffee-house, and shared with her a litre of white wine. A litre, no less.

Herman himself had been to the scenic railway, but only because he occupied a small room in the house where the American manager lived. The manager had given tickets to Black Humbert, the concierge, but Humbert was busy with other things, and was, besides, chary of foreign deviltries. So he had passed the tickets on.

It was Peter, then, who made the impossible possible, who wore good clothes and did not have his boots patched, who went, rumor said, to the opera now and then, and followed the score on his own battered copy.

How?

Herman Spier had suspected him of many things; had secretly audited his cash slips; had watched him for surreptitious parcels of silk. Once he had thought he had him. But the package of Lyons silk, opened by the proprietor at Herman's

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suggestion, proved to be material for a fancy waistcoat, and paid for by Peter Niburg's own hand.

With what? Herman stood confused, even confounded, but still suspicious. And now, this very day, he had stumbled on something. A great lady from the Court had made a purchase, and had left, under a roll of silk, a letter. There was no mistake. And Peter Niburg had put away the silk, and pocketed the letter, after a swift glance over the little shop.

An intrigue, then, with Peter Niburg as the go-between, or—something else. Something vastly more important, the discovery of which would bring Herman prominence beyond his fellows in a certain secret order to which he belonged.

In a way, he was a stupid man, this pale-eyed clerk who sold the quaint red and yellow cottons of the common people side by side with the heavy linens that furnished forth the tables of the rich. But hatred gave him wits. Gave him speed, too. He was only thirty feet behind Peter Niburg when that foppish gentleman reached the corner.

Herman was skilled in certain matters. He knew, for instance, that a glance into a shop window, a halt to tie a shoe, may be a ruse for passing a paper to other hands. But Peter did not stop. He went, not more swiftly than usual, to his customary restaurant, one which faced over the square and commanded a view of the palace. And there he settled himself in a window and ordered his dinner.

From the outside Herman stared in. He did not dine there. It was, for one thing, a matter of bitterness to see sitting at the cashier's high desk, the little Marie, grown somewhat with flesh, it is true, but still lovely in his eyes. It made Herman wince, even now, to see through the window that her husband patted her hand as he brought her money to be changed.

He lurked in the shadows outside, and watched. Peter sat alone. He had bowed very stiffly to Marie, and had passed the desk with his chest out. She had told him once that he had a fine figure.

Peter sat alone, and stared out. Herman took shelter, and watched. But Peter Niburg did not see him. His eyes were fixed on the gloomy mass across, shot with small lights from deep windows, which was the palace.

Peter was calm. He had carried many such letters as the one now hidden in his breast pocket. No conscience stirred in him. If he did not do this work, others would. He shrugged his shoulders. He drank his brandy, and glanced at Marie. He found her eyes on him. Pretty eyes they still were, and just now speculative. He smiled at her, but she averted her head, and colored. Many things filled Peter Niburg's mind. If now she was not happy, what then? Her husband adored her. It was fatal. A woman should not be too sure of a husband. And probably he bored her. Another six months, and perhaps she would not turn away her head.

He had until midnight. At that hour a messenger would receive the letter from him in the colonnade of the cathedral. On this night, each week, the messenger waited. Sometimes there was a letter, sometimes none. That was all. It was amazingly simple, and for it one received the difference between penury and comfort.

Seeing Peter settled, a steaming platter before him, Herman turned and hurried through the night. This which he had happened on was a big thing, too big for him alone. Two heads were better than one. He would take advice.

Off the main avenue he fell into a smart trot. The color came to his pale cheeks. A cold sweat broke out over him. He was short of wind from many cigarettes. But at last he reached the house. It was near the park. Although the season was early spring and there was more than a hint of winter in the air, the scenic railway, he perceived, was already open for business. Certainly the Americans were enterprising.

The double doors of the tall, gloomy house on the Road of Good Children were already closed for the evening. As he stood panting, after he had rung the bell, Herman Spier could look across to that remote and unfashionable end of the great park where the people played on pleasant evenings, and where even now, on the heels of winter, the scenic railway made a pretense at summer.

The sight recalled that other vision of Marie and Peter Niburg, snugly settled in a car, Marie a trifle pale and apprehensive. Herman swore softly, and opened the doors.

Black Humbert was not in his bureau, behind the grating. With easy familiarity Herman turned to a door beyond and

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ANNUNCIATA WAS ASLEEP, AND BEYOND, HILDA WAS PLAYING DREAMILY, AND VERY SOFTLY.

entered. A dirty little room, it was littered now with the preparations for a meal. On the bare table were a loaf, a jug of beer, and a dish of fried veal. The concierge was at the stove making gravy in a frying-pan—a huge man, bearded and heavy of girth, yet stepping lightly, like a cat. A dark man and called "the Black," he yet revealed, on full glance, eyes curiously pale and flat.

No greeting passed between them. Humbert gave his visitor a quick glance. Herman closed the door, and wiped out the band of his hat. The concierge poured the gravy over the meat.

"I have discovered something," Herman said. "As to its value, I know nothing, or its use to us."

"Let me judge that." But the concierge was unmoved by Herman's excitement. He dealt in sensations. His daily tools were

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THE COUNTESS TURNED AND, SEPARATING THE CURTAINS, SURVEYED THE ROOM WITHIN.

men less clever than himself, men who constantly made worthless discoveries. And it was the dinner hour. His huge body was crying for food.

"It is a matter of a letter."

"Sit down, man, and tell it. Or do you wish me to draw the information, like bad teeth?"

"A letter from the palace," said Herman. And explained.

Black Humbert listened. He was skeptical, but not entirely incredulous. He knew the Court—none better. The women of the Court wrote many letters. He saw a number of them, through one of his men in the post-office. There were many intrigues. After all, who could blame them? The Court was dreary enough these days, and if they chose to amuse themselves as best they could—one must make allowances.

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"A *liaison!*" he said at last, with his mouth full. "The Countess is handsome, and bored. Annunciata is driving her to wickedness, as she drove her husband. But it is worth consideration. Even the knowledge of an intrigue is often helpful. Of what size was the letter?"

"A small envelop. I saw no more."

The concierge reflected. "The Countess uses a gray paper with a coronet."

"This was white."

Black Humbert reflected. "There is, of course, a chance that he has already passed this on. But even if so, there will be others. The Countess comes often to the shop?"

"Once in a week, perhaps."

"So." The big man rose, and untied his soiled apron. "Go back," he said, "and enter the restaurant. Order a small meal, that you may have finished when he does. Leave with him and suggest the Hungaria."

"Hungaria! I have no money."

"You will need no money. Now mark this: At a certain corner you will be attacked and robbed. A mere form," he added, as he saw Herman's pallid face go whiter. "For the real envelop will be substituted another. In his breast pocket, you said. Well, then suggest going to his room. He may," added the concierge grimly, "require your assistance. Leave him at his lodging, but watch the house. It is important to know to whom he delivers these letters."

As the man stood, he seemed to the cowering Herman to swell until he dominated the room. He took on authority. To Herman came suddenly the memory of a hidden room, and many men, and one, huge and towering, who held the others in the hollow of his hand. Herman turned to go, but at the door the concierge stopped him.

"A moment," he said. "We will select first the shape and fashion of this envelop you saw. These matters require finesse."

He disappeared, returning shortly with a wooden box, filled to the top with old envelops. Each had been neatly opened and its contents extracted. And on each was neatly penned in a corner the name of the sender. Herman watched while the concierge dug through it.

"Here it is," he said at last. "The Countess, to her aunt in a nunnery and relating to wool knitting. See, is this the sort of envelop?"

"That is gray," Herman Spier said sullenly.

"But in size?"

"It is similar."

"Good." He held the envelop to the light and inspected it. "It would be interesting to know," he said, "whether the Countess has an aunt in this nunnery, or whether—but go, man. And hurry."

Left alone, he got together pens, ink, and carbon paper. He worked awkwardly, his hands too large for the pen, his elbows spread wide over the table. But the result was fair. He surveyed it with satisfaction.

Meanwhile, back went Herman over his earlier route. But now he did not run. His craven knees shook beneath him. Fresh sweat, not of haste but of fear, broke out over him. He who was brave enough of tongue in the meetings, who was capable of rising to heights of cruelty that amounted to ferocity when one of a mob, was a coward alone.

However, the sight of the restaurant, and of his fellow clerk eating calmly, quieted him. Peter Niburg was still alone. Herman took a table near him, and ordered a bowl of soup. His hands shook, but the hot food revived him. After all, it was simple enough. But, of course, it hinged entirely on his fellow clerk's agreeing to accompany him.

He glanced across. Peter Niburg was eating, but his eyes were fixed on Madame Marie, at her high desk. There was speculation in them, and something else. Triumph perhaps.

Suddenly Herman became calm. Calm with hate.

And, after all, it was very easy. Peter Niburg was lonely. The burden of the letter oppressed him. He wanted the comfort of human conversation and the reassurance of a familiar face. When the two met at the rack by the door which contained their hats, his expression was almost friendly. They went out together.

"A fine night," said Herman, and cast an eye at the sky.

"Fine enough."

"Too good to waste in sleep. I was thinking," observed Herman, "of an hour or two at the Hungaria."

The Hungaria! Something in Peter's pleasure-hungry heart leaped, but he mocked his fellow clerk.

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"Since when," he inquired, "have you frequented the Hungaria?"

"I feel in the mood," was the somewhat sullen reply. "I work hard enough, God knows, to have a little pleasure now and then." Danger was making him shrewd. He turned away from Peter Niburg, then faced him again. "If you care to come," he suggested. "Not a supper, you understand, but a glass of wine, Italian champagne," he added.

Peter Niburg was fond of sweet champagne.

Peter Niburg pushed his hat to the back of his head, and hung his stick over his forearm. After all, why not? Marie was gone. Let the past die. If Herman could make the first move, let him, Peter, make the second. He linked arms with his old enemy.

"A fine night," he said.

CHAPTER TEN

The Right to Live and Love

DINNER was over in the dull old dining-room. The Archduchess Annunciata lighted a cigarette, and glanced across the table at Hedwig.

Hedwig had been very silent during the meal. She had replied civilly when spoken to, but that was all. Her mother, who had caught the Countess's trick of narrowing her eyes, inspected her from under lowered lids.

"Well?" she said. "Are you still sulky?"

"I? Not at all, mother." Her head went up, and she confronted her mother squarely.

"I should like to inquire, if I may," observed the Archduchess, "just how you have spent the day—until the little *divertissement* on which I stumbled. This morning, for instance?"

Hedwig shrugged her shoulders, but her color rose. It came in a soft wave over her neck and mounted higher and higher. "Very quietly, mother," she said.

"Naturally. We are always quiet here. But how?"

"I rode."

"Where?"

"At the riding-school, with Otto."

"Only with Otto?"

"Captain Larisch was there."

"Of course! Then you have practically spent the day with him!"

"I have spent most of the day with Otto."

"This devotion to Otto—it is new, I think. You were eager to get out of the nursery. Now, it appears, you must fly back to school-room teas and other absurdities. I should like to know why."

"I think Otto is lonely, mother."

Hilda took advantage of her mother's preoccupation to select another peach. She was permitted only one, being of the age when fruit caused her, colloquially speaking, to "break out." She was only faintly interested in the conversation. She dreaded these family meals, with her mother's sharp voice and the Countess Loschek's almost too soft one. But now a restrained irritability in the tones of the Archduchess made her glance up. The Archduchess was in one of her sudden moods of irritation. Hedwig's remark about Otto's loneliness, the second that day, struck home. In her anger she forgot her refusal to the Chancellor.

"I have something to say that will put an end to this sentimental nonsense of yours, Hedwig. I should forbid your seeing this boy, this young Larisch, if I felt it necessary. I do not. You would probably see him anyhow, for that matter. Which, as I observed this afternoon, also reminds me unpleasantly of your father." She rose, and threw her bolt out of a clear sky. She had had, as a matter of fact, no previous intention of launching any bolt. It was wholly a result of irritation. "It is unnecessary to remind you not to make a fool of yourself. But it may not be out of place to say that your grandfather has certain plans for you that will take your mind away from this—this silly boy, soon enough."

Hedwig had risen, and was standing, very white, with her hands on the table. "What plans, mother?"

"He will tell you."

"Not—I am not to be married?"

The Archduchess Annunciata was not all hard. She could never forgive her children their father. They reminded her daily of a part of her life that she would have put behind her. But they were her children, and Hedwig was all that she was not, gentle and round and young. Suddenly something almost like regret stirred in her.

"Don't look like that, child," she said. "It is not settled. And, after all, one marriage or another—what difference does it make! Men are men. If one does not care,

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it makes the things they do unimportant."

"But surely," Hedwig gasped, "surely I shall be consulted?"

Annunciata shook her head. They had all risen and Hilda was standing, the peach forgotten, her mouth a little open. As for Olga Loschek, she was very still, but her eyes burned. The Archduchess remembered her presence no more than that of the flowers on the table.

"Mother, you can not look back, and—and remember your own life, and allow me to be wretched. You can not!"

Hilda picked up her peach. It was all very exciting, but Hedwig was being rather silly. Besides, why was she so distracted when she did not know who the man was? It might be some quite handsome person. For Hilda was also at the age when men were handsome or not handsome, and nothing else.

Unexpectedly Hedwig began to cry. This Hilda considered going much too far, and bad taste into the bargain. She slipped the peach into the waist of her frock.

The Archduchess hated tears, and her softer moments were only moments. "Dry your eyes, and don't be silly," she said coldly. "You have always known that something of the sort was inevitable."

She moved toward the door. The two princesses and her lady in waiting remained still until she had left the table. Then they fell in behind her, and the little procession moved to the stuffy boudoir, for coffee. But Hilda slipped her arm around her sister's waist, and the touch comforted Hedwig.

"He may be very nice," Hilda volunteered cautiously. "Perhaps it is Karl. I am quite mad about Karl, myself."

Hedwig, however, was beyond listening. She went slowly to a window, and stood gazing out. Looming against the sky-line, in the very center of the Place, was the heroic figure of her dead grandmother. She fell to wondering about these royal women who had preceded her. Her mother, frankly unhappy in her marriage, permanently embittered; her grandmother. Hedwig had never seen the King young. She could not picture him as a lover. To her he was a fine and lonely figure. But romantic? Had he ever been romantic?

He had made her mother's marriage, and had lived to regret it. He would make hers. But what about the time when he himself had taken a wife? Hedwig gazed at the statue. Had she too come with unwilling arms? And if she had, was it true that after all, in a year or a lifetime, it made no difference?

She slipped out on to the balcony and closed the curtains behind her. As her eyes grew accustomed to the darkness she saw that there was some one below, under the trees. Her heart beat rapidly. In a moment she was certain. It was Nikky down there, Nikky, gazing up at her as a child may look at a star. With a quick gesture Hedwig drew the curtain back. A thin ray of light fell on her, on her slim bare arms, on her light draperies, on her young face. He had wanted to see her, and he should see her. Then she dropped the curtain, and twisted her hands together lest, in spite of her, they reach out toward him.

Did she fancy it, or did the figure salute her? Then came the quick ring of heels on the old stone pavement. She knew his footsteps, even as she knew every vibrant, eager inflection of his voice. He went away, across the square, like one who, having bent his knee to a saint, turns back to the business of the world.

In the boudoir the Archduchess had picked up some knitting to soothe her jangled nerves. "You may play now, Hilda," she said.

Into Hilda's care-free young life came two bad hours each day. One was the dinner hour, when she ate under her mother's pitiless eyes. The other was the hour after dinner, when, alone in the white drawing-room beyond the boudoir, with the sliding doors open, she sat at the grand piano, which was white and gold, like the room, and as cold, and played to her mother's pitiless ears.

She went slowly into the drawing-room. Empty, it was a dreary place. The heavy chandeliers of gold and cut glass were unlighted. The crimson and gilt chairs were covered with white linen. Only the piano, a gleaming oasis in a desert of polished floor, was lighted, and that by two tall candles in gilt candlesticks that reached from the floor. Hilda, going reluctantly to her post, was the only bit of life and color in the room.

At last Annunciata dozed, and Hilda played softly. Played now, not for her mother, but for herself. And as she played she dreamed: of Hedwig's wedding, of her own *début*, of Karl, who had fed her

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romantic heart by treating her like a woman grown.

The Countess's opportunity had come. She put down the dreary embroidery with which she filled the drearier evenings, and moved to the window. She walked quietly, like a cat.

Her first words to Hedwig were those of Peter Niburg as he linked arms with his enemy and started down the street. "A fine night, Highness," she said.

Hedwig raised her eyes to the stars. "It is very lovely."

"A night to spend out-of-doors, instead of being shut up—" she finished her sentence with a shrug of the shoulders.

Hedwig was not fond of the Countess. She did not know why. The truth being, of course, that between them lay the barrier of her own innocence. Hedwig could not have put this into words, would not, indeed, if she could. But when the Countess's arm touched hers, she drew aside.

"To-night," said the lady in waiting dreamily, "I should like to be in a motor, speeding over mountain roads. I come from the mountains, you know. And I miss them."

Hedwig said nothing; she wished to be alone with her trouble.

"In my home, at this time of the year," the Countess went on, still softly, "they are driving the cattle up into the mountains for the summer. At night one hears them going—a bell far off up the mountainside, and sometimes one sees the light of a lantern."

Hedwig moved, a little impatiently, but as the Countess went on, she listened. After all, Nikky too came from the mountains. She saw it all—the great herds moving with deliberate eagerness already sniffing the green slopes above and the star of the distant lantern. She could even hear the thin note of the bell. And because she was sorry for the Countess, who was homesick, and perhaps because just then she had to speak to some one, she turned to her at last with the thing that filled her mind.

"This marriage," she said bitterly. "Is it talked about? Am I the only one in the palace who has not known about it?"

"No, Highness, I had heard nothing."

"But *you* knew about it?"

"Only what I heard to-night. Of course, there are always rumors."

"As to the other, the matter my mother referred to," Hedwig held her head very high, "I—she was unjust. Am I never to have any friends?"

The Countess turned and, separating the curtains, surveyed the room within. Annunciata was asleep, and beyond, Hilda was playing dreamily, and very softly, as behooves one whose bedtime is long past. When the Countess dropped the curtain she turned abruptly to Hedwig.

"Friends, Highness? One may have friends, of course. It is not friendship they fear."

"What then?"

"A lover," said the Countess softly. "It is impossible to see Captain Larisch in your presence, and not realize——"

"Go on."

"And not realize, Highness, that he is in love with you."

"How silly!" said the Princess Hedwig, with glowing eyes.

"But, Highness!" implored the Countess. "If only you would use a little caution. Open defiance is its own defeat."

"I am not ashamed of what I do," said Hedwig hotly.

"Ashamed! Of course not. But things that are harmless in others, in your position —You are young. You should have friends, gaiety. I am," she smiled grimly in the darkness, "not so old myself but that I can understand."

"Who told my mother that I was having tea with—with Prince Otto?"

"These things get about. Where there is no gossip, there are plenty to invent it. And—pardon, Highness,—frankness, openness, are not always understood."

Hedwig stood still. The old city was preparing for sleep. In the Place a few lovers loitered, standing close, and the faint tinkling of a bell told of the Blessed Sacrament being carried through the streets to some bedside of the dying Soon the priest came into view, walking rapidly, with his skirts flapping around his legs. Before him marched a boy, ringing a bell and carrying a lighted lamp. The priest bent his steps through the Place, and the lovers kneeled, as he passed by. The Princess Hedwig bowed her head.

It seemed to her, all at once, that the world was full of wretchedness and death, and of separation, which might be worse than death. The lamp, passing behind trees, shone out fitfully. The bell tinkled, a thin

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silvery sound that made her heart ache.

"I wish I could help you, Highness," said the Countess. "I should like to see you happy. But happiness does not come of itself. We must fight for it."

"Fight? What chance have I to fight?" Hedwig asked scornfully.

"One thing, of course, I could do," pursued the Countess. "On those days when you wish to have tea with—his Royal Highness, I could arrange, perhaps, to let you know if any member of the family intended going to his apartments."

It was a moment before Hedwig comprehended. Then she turned to her haughtily. "When I wish to have tea with my cousin," she said coldly, "I shall do it openly, Countess."

She left the balcony abruptly, abandoning the Countess to solitary fury, the greater because triumph had seemed so near. Alone, she went red and white, bit her lips, behaved according to all the time-honored traditions. And even swore, in a polite, lady-in-waiting fashion, to be sure, to get even.

Royalties, as she knew well, were difficult to manage. They would go along perfectly well, and act like human beings, and rage and fuss and grieve, and even weep. And then, quite unexpectedly, the royal streak would show. But royalties in love were rather rare in her experience. Love was, generally speaking, not a royal attribute. Apparently it required a new set of rules.

Altogether, the Countess Loschek worked herself to quite as great a fury as if her motives had been purely altruistic, and not both selfish and wicked.

That night, while the Prince Ferdinand William Otto hugged the woolen dog in his sleep; while the Duchess Hilda, in front of her dressing-table, was having her hair brushed; while Nikky roamed the streets and saw nothing but the vision of a girl on a balcony, a girl who was lost to him, although she had never been anything else, Hedwig on her knees at the *prie-dieu* in her dressing-room, followed the example of the Chancellor, who too had felt himself in a tight corner, as one may say, and was growing tired of putting his trust in princes. So Hedwig prayed for many things: for the softening of hard hearts; for Nikky's love; and, perhaps a trifle tardily, for the welfare and recovery of her grandfather, the King. But mostly she prayed for happiness, for a bit of light and warmth in her gray days—to be allowed to live and love.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Rather a Wild Night

THINGS were going very wrong for Nikky Larisch.

Not handsome, in any exact sense, was Nikky, but tall and straight, with a thatch of bright hair not unlike that of the Crown Prince, and as unruly. Tall and straight, and occasionally truculent, with a narrow rapier scar on his left cheek to tell the story of wild student days, and with two clear young eyes that had looked out humorously at the world until lately. But Nikky was not smiling at the world these days.

Perhaps, at the very first, he had been in love with the princess, not the woman. It had been rather like him to fix on the unattainable and worship it from afar. Because, for all the friendliness of their growing intimacy, Hedwig was still a star, whose light touched him, but whose warmth was not for him. He would have died fighting for her with a smile on his lips. There had been times when he almost wished he might. He used to figure out pleasant little dramas, in which, fallen on the battle-field, his last word, uttered in all reverence, was her name. But he had no hope of living for her, unless, of course, she should happen to need him, which was most unlikely. He had no vanity whatever, although in parade dress, with white gloves, he hoped he cut a decent figure.

So she had been his star, and as cold and remote. And then, that very morning, whether it was the new cross-saddle suit or whatever it was, Hedwig had been thrown. Not badly—she was too expert for that. As a matter of fact, feeling herself going, she had flung two strong young arms around her horse's neck, and had almost succeeded in lighting on her feet. It was not at all dramatic.

But Nikky's heart had stopped beating. He had lifted her up from where she sat, half vexed and wholly ashamed, and carried her to a chair. That was all. But when it was all over, and Hedwig was only a trifle wobbly and horribly humiliated, Nikky Larisch knew the truth about himself, knew that he was in love with the granddaughter

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A MOMENT LATER HE WAS IN THE THICK OF THINGS AND FIGHTING GLORIOUSLY.

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of his King, and that under no conceivable circumstances would he ever be able to tell her so. Knew, then, that happiness and he had said a long farewell, and would thereafter travel different roads.

It had stunned him. He had stood quite still and thought about it. And Prince Ferdinand William Otto had caught him in the act of thinking, and had stood before him and surveyed him anxiously.

"You needn't look so worried, you know," he protested. "She's not really hurt."

Nikky came back, but slowly. He had in a few seconds already traveled a long way along the lonely road. But he smiled down at the little Prince.

"But she might have been, you know. It —it rather alarmed me."

Prince Ferdinand William Otto was for continuing the subject. He blamed the accident on the new riding-suit, and was royally outspoken about it. "And anyhow," he finished, "I don't like her in boy's clothes. Half of her looks like a girl, and the rest doesn't."

Nikky, letting his eyes rest on her, realized that all of her to him was wonderful, and forever beyond reach.

So that night he started out to think things over. Probably never before in his life had he deliberately done such a thing. He had never, as a fact, thought much at all. It had been his comfortable habit to let the day take care of itself. Beyond minor problems of finance—minor because his income was trifling—he had considered little. In the last border war he had distinguished himself only when it was a matter of doing, not of thinking.

He was very humble about himself. His young swagger was a sort of defiance. And he was not subtle. Taken suddenly, through the Chancellor's favor, into the circles of the Court, its intrigues and poisoned whispers passed him by. He did not know they existed. And he had one creed, and only one, to love God, honor the King, and live like a gentleman.

On this boy, then, with the capacity for suffering of his single-minded type, had fallen the mantle of trouble. It puzzled him. He did not exactly know what to do about it. And it hurt. It hurt horribly.

That night, following the Archduchess's confidence, he had stood under the palace windows, in the Place, and looked up. Not that he expected to see Hedwig. He did it instinctively, turning toward her hidden presence with a sort of bewildered yearning. Across his path, as he turned away, had passed the little procession of the priest and the sacrament. He knelt, as did the lovers and the passers-by, and when he got up he followed the small flame of the lamp with his eyes as far as he could see it.

This was life, then. One lived and suffered and yearned, and then came death. Were there barriers of rank over there? Or were all equal, so that those who had loved on earth without hope might meet face to face? The tinkle of the bell grew fainter. This weight that he carried, it would be his all his life. And then, one day, he too would hear the bell coming nearer and nearer, and he would die, without having lived.

But he was young, and the night was crisp and beautiful. He took a long breath, and looked up at the stars. After all, things might not be so bad. Hedwig might refuse this marriage. They were afraid that she would, or why have asked his help? When he thought of King Karl, he drew himself up, and his heels rang hard on the pavement. Karl! A hard man and a good king—that was Karl. And old. From the full manhood of his twenty-three years Nikky surveyed Karl's almost forty, and considered it age.

But soon he was bitter again, bitter and jealous. Back there in the palace they were plotting their own safety, and making a young girl pay for it. He swore softly.

It was typical of Nikky to decide that he needed a hard walk. He translated most of his emotions into motion. So he set off briskly, turning into the crowded part of the city. Here were narrow, winding streets; old houses that overhung above and almost touched, shutting out all but a thin line of sky; medieval doorways of heavy oak and iron that opened into courtyards, where once armed men had lounged, but where now broken wagons and other riffraff were stored.

And here it was that Nikky happened on the thing that was to take him far that night, and bring about many curious things. Not far ahead of him two men were talking. They went slowly, arm in arm. One was talking loquaciously, using his free arm, on which hung a cane, to gesticulate. The other walked with bent head.

Nikky, pausing to light a cigarette, fell

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behind. But the wind was tricky, and with his third match he stepped into a stone archway, lighted his cigarette, buttoned his tunic high against the chill, and emerged to a silent but violent struggle just ahead. The two men had been attacked by three others, and as he stared, the loquacious one went down. Instantly a huge figure of a man outlined against the light from a street lamp, crouched over the prostrate form of the fallen man. Even in the imperceptible second before he started to run toward the group, Nikky saw that the silent one, unmolested, was looking on.

A moment later he was in the thick of things and fighting gloriously. His soldierly cap fell off. His fair hair bristled with excitement. He flung out arms that were both furious and strong, and with each blow the group assumed a new formation. Unluckily, a great deal of the fighting was done over the prostrate form of Peter Niburg.

Suddenly one of the group broke away, and ran down the street. He ran rather like a kangaroo, gathering his feet under him and proceeding by a series of leaps, almost as if he were being shamefully pricked from behind. At a corner he turned pale, terror-stricken eyes back on that sinister group, and went on into the labyrinth of small streets.

But disaster, inglorious disaster, waited for Nikky. Peter Niburg, face down on the pavement, was groaning, and Nikky had felled one man and was starting on a second with the fighting appetite of twenty-three, when something happened. One moment Nikky was smiling, with a cut lip, and hair in his eyes, and the next he was dropped like an ox, by a blow from behind. Landing between his shoulder-blades, it jerked his head back with a snap, and sent him reeling. A second followed, delivered by a huge fist.

Down went Nikky, and lay still.

The town slept on. Street brawls were not uncommon, especially in the neighborhood of the Hungaria. Those who roused grumbled about quarrelsome students, and slept again.

Perhaps two minutes later, Nikky got up. He was another minute in locating himself. His cap lay in the gutter. Beside him, on his back, lay a sprawling and sterterous figure, with, so quick the downfall, a cane still hooked to his arm.

Nikky bent over Peter Niburg. Bending over made his head ache abominably. "Here, man!" he said. "Get up! Rouse yourself!"

Peter Niburg made an inarticulate reference to a piece of silk of certain quality, and lay still. But his eyes opened slowly, and he stared up at the stars. "A fine night," he said thickly. "A very fine—" Suddenly he raised himself to a sitting posture. Terror gave him strength. "I've been robbed," he said. "Robbed. I am ruined. I am dead."

"Tut," said Nikky, mopping his cut lip. "If you are dead, your spirit speaks with an uncommonly lusty voice! Come, get up. We present together a shameful picture of defeat."

But he raised Peter Niburg gently from the ground and, finding his knees unstable, from fright or weakness, stood him against a house wall. Peter Niburg, with rolling eyes, felt for his letter, and, the saints be praised, found it.

"Ah!" he said, and straightened up. "After all, it is not so bad as I feared. They got nothing."

He made a manful effort to walk, but tottered, reeled. Nikky caught him.

"Careful!" he said. "The colossus was doubtless the one who got us both, and we are likely to feel his weight for some time. Where do you live?"

Peter Niburg was not for saying. He would have preferred to pursue his solitary if uncertain way. But Nikky was no half Samaritan. Toward Peter Niburg's lodging, then, they made a slow progress.

"These recent gentlemen," said Nikky, as they went along, "they are, perhaps, personal enemies?"

"I do not know. I saw nothing."

"One was very large, a giant of a man. Do you know such a man?"

Peter Niburg reflected. He thought not. "But I know why they came," he said unguardedly. "Some early morning, my friend, you will hear of a man lying dead in the street. That man will be I."

"The thought has a moral," observed Nikky. "Do not trust yourself out-of-doors at night."

But he saw that Peter Niburg kept his hand over his breast pocket.

Never having dealt in mysteries, Nikky was slow at recognizing one. But, he reflected, many things were going on in the old city in these troubled days. Came to Nikky, all at once, that this man on his arm

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might be one of the hidden eyes of government.

"These are difficult times," he ventured, "for those who are loyal."

Peter Niburg gave him a side-long glance. "Difficult indeed," he said briefly.

"But," said Nikky, "perhaps we fear too much. The people love the boy Prince. And without the people revolution can accomplish nothing."

"Nothing at all," assented Peter Niburg.

"I think," Nikky observed, finding his companion unresponsive, "that, after I see you safely home, I shall report this small matter to the police. Surely there can not be in the city many such gorillas as our friend with the beard and the huge body."

But here Peter Niburg turned even paler. "Not—not the police!" he stammered.

"But why? You and I, my friend, will carry their insignia for some days. I have a mind to pay our debts."

Peter Niburg considered. He stopped and faced Nikky. "I do not wish the police," he said. "Perhaps I have said too little. This is a private matter. An affair of jealousy."

"I see!"

"Naturally, not a matter for publicity."

"Very well," Nikky assented. But in his mind was rising dark suspicion. He had stumbled on something. He cursed his stupidity that it meant, so far, nothing more than a mystery to him. He did not pride himself on his intelligence.

"You were not alone, I think?"

Peter Niburg suddenly remembered Herman, and stopped.

"Your friend must have escaped."

"He *would* escape," said Peter Niburg, scornfully. "He is of the type that runs."

He lapsed into sullen silence. Soon he paused before a quiet house, one of the many which housed in cavernous depths uncounted clerks and other small fry of the city. "Good night to you," said Peter Niburg. Then, rather tardily. "And my thanks. But for you I should now—" he shrugged his shoulders.

"Good night, friend," said Nikky. "And better keep your bed to-morrow."

He had turned away, and Peter Niburg entered the house.

Nikky inspected himself in the glow of a street lamp. Save for some dust, and a swollen lip, which he could not see, he was not unpresentable. Well enough, anyhow, for the empty streets. But before he started he looked the house and the neighborhood over carefully. He might wish to return to that house.

For two hours he walked, and resumed his interrupted train of thought—past the gloomy university buildings, past the quay, where sailed the vessels that during peaceful times went along the Ar through the low lands of Karnia to the sea. At last, having almost circled the city, he came to the cathedral. It was nearly midnight by the clock in the high tower. He stopped and consulted his watch. The fancy took him to go up the high steps, and look out over the city from the colonnade.

Once there, he stood leaning against a column, looking out. The sleeping town appealed to him. Just so had it lain in old feudal times, clustered about the church and the palace, and looking to both for protection. It had grown since then, had extended beyond the walls which sheltered it, had now destroyed those walls and, filling in the moat, had built thereon its circling parks. And other things had changed. No longer, he reflected gloomily, did it look to the palace, save with tolerance and occasional disloyalty. The old order was changing. And, with all his hot young heart, Nikky was for the old order.

There was some one coming along the quiet streets, with a stealthy, shuffling gait that caught his attention. So, for instance, might a weary or a wounded man drag along. Exactly so, indeed, had Peter Niburg shambled into his house but two hours gone.

The footsteps paused, hesitated, commenced a painful struggle up the ascent. Nikky moved behind his column, and waited. Up and up, weary step after weary step. The shadowy figure, coming close, took a form, became a man—became Peter Niburg.

Now indeed Nikky roused. Beaten and sorely bruised, Peter Niburg should have been in bed. What stealthy business of the night brought him out?

Fortunately for Nikky's hiding-place, the last step or two proved too much for the spy. He groaned, and sat down painfully, near the top. His head lolled forward, and he supported it on two shaking hands. Thus he sat, huddled and miserable, for five minutes or thereabouts. The chime rang out

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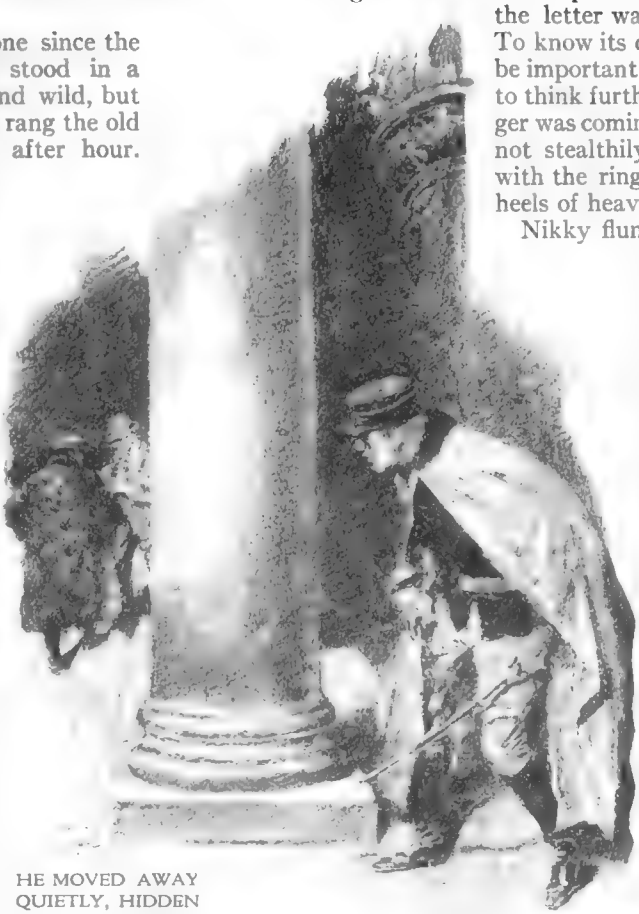
overhead the old hymn which the little Crown Prince so often sang to it:

Draw me also, Mary mild,
To adore Thee and thy Child!
Mary mild,
Star in desert drear and wild.

Time had gone since the old church stood in a desert drear and wild, but still its chimes rang the old petition, hour after hour.

At ten minutes past the hour, Nikky heard the engine of an automobile. No machine came in sight, but the throbbing kept on, from which he judged that a car had been stopped around the corner. Peter Niburg heard it, and rose. A moment later a man, with the springiness of youth, mounted the steps and confronted the messenger.



HE MOVED AWAY QUIETLY, HIDDEN BY THE SHADOWS OF THE COLONNADE.

Nikky saw a great light. When Peter Niburg put his hand to his breast pocket, there was no longer room for doubt, nor, for that matter, time for thinking. As a matter of fact, never afterward could Nikky recall thinking at all. He moved away quietly, hidden by the shadows of the colonnade. Behind him, on the steps, the two men were talking. Peter Niburg's nasal voice had taken on a whining note. Short, gruff syllables replied. Absorbed in themselves and their business, they neither heard nor saw the figure that slipped through the colonnade, and dropped, a blood-curdling drop, from the high end of it to the street below.

Nikky's first impulse, beside the car, was to cut a tire. By getting his opponent into a stooping position, over the damaged wheel, it would be easier to overcome him. But a hasty search revealed that he had lost his knife in the *mêlée*. And second thought gave him a better plan. After all, to get the letter was not everything. To know its destination would be important. He had no time to think further. The messenger was coming down the steps, not stealthily, but clattering, with the ring of nails in the heels of heavy boots.

Nikky flung his long length into the tonneau, and there crouched. It was dark enough to conceal him, but Nikky's was a large body in a small place. However, the chauffeur only glanced at the car, kicked a tire with a practised foot, and got in.

He headed for the open country. Very soon his passenger knew that he was in for a long ride possibly, a cold ride certainly. Within the city limits the car moved decorously, but when the suburbs were reached, the driver put on all his power. He drove carefully, too, as one who must make haste but can not afford accident.

Nikky grew very uncomfortable. His long legs ached. The place between the shoulders where the concierge had landed his powerful blows throbbed and beat. Also he was puzzled, and he hated being puzzled. He was unarmed, too. He disliked that most of all. Generally speaking, he felt his position humiliating. He was a soldier, not a spy. His training had been to fight, not to hide and watch.

After a time he raised his head. He made out that they were going east, toward the

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mountains, and he cursed the luck that had left his revolver at home. Still he had no plan but to watch. Two hours' ride, at their present rate, would take them over the border and into Karnia.

Nikky, although no thinker, was not a fool, and he knew rather better than most what dangers threatened the country from outside as well. Also, in the back of his impulsive head was a sort of dogged quality that was near to obstinacy. He had started this thing and he would see it through. And as the car approached the border, he began to realize that this was not of the Terrorists at home, but something sinister, abroad.

With a squealing of brakes the machine drew up at the frontier. Here was a chain across the highway, with two sets of guards. Long before they reached it, a sentry stepped into the road and waved his lantern.

Nikky burrowed lower into the car, and attempted to look like a rug. In the silence, while the sentry evidently examined a passport and flashed a lantern over the chauffeur, Nikky cursed the ticking of his watch, the beating of his own heart.

Then came a clanking as the chain dropped in the road. The car bumped over it, and halted again. The same formalities, this time by Karnian sentries. A bit more danger, too, for the captain in charge of the guard asked for matches, and dangled a careless hand over the side, within a few inches of Nikky's head. Then the jerk following a hasty letting in of the clutch, and they were off again.

For some time they climbed steadily. But Nikky, who knew the road, bided his time. Then at last, at two o'clock, came the steep ascent to the very crest of the mountain, and a falling back, gear by gear, until they climbed slowly in the lowest.

Nikky unfolded his length quietly. The gears were grinding, the driver bent low over his wheel. Very deliberately, now that he knew what he was going to do, Nikky unbuttoned his tunic and slipped it off. It was a rash thing, this plan he had in mind, rash under any circumstances, in a moving car—particularly rash here, where between the cliff and a precipice that fell far away below, was only a winding ribbon of uneven road.

Here, at the crucial moment, undoubtedly he should have given a last thought to Hedwig. But alas for romance! As a matter of honesty, he had completely forgotten Hedwig. This was his work, and with even the hottest of lovers, work and love are things apart.

So he waited his moment, loveless, as one may say, and then, with one singularly efficient gesture, he flung his tunic over the chauffeur's head. He drove a car himself, did Nikky—not his own, of course; he was far too poor—and he counted on one thing: An automobile driver acts from the spinal cord, and not from the brain. Therefore his brain may be seething with a thousand frenzies, but he will shove out clutch and brake feet in an emergency, and hold them out.

So it happened. The man's hands left the wheel, but he stopped his car. Not too soon. Not before it had struck the cliff, and then taken a sickening curve out toward the edge of the precipice. But stop it did, on the very edge of eternity, and the chauffeur held it there.

"Set the hand brake!" Nikky said. The lamps were near enough the edge to make him dizzy.

The chauffeur ceased struggling, and set the hand brake. His head was still covered. But having done that, he commenced a struggle more furious than forceful, for both of them were handicapped. But Nikky had steel-like young arms from which escape was impossible.

And now Nikky was forced to an unsoldier-like thing that he afterward tried to forget. For the driver developed unexpected strength, refused to submit, got the tunic off his head, and, seeing himself attacked by one man only, took courage and fell to. He picked up a wrench from the seat beside him, and made a furious pass at Nikky's head. Nikky ducked and, after a struggle, secured the weapon. All this in the car, over the seat back.

It was then that Nikky raised the wrench and stunned his man with it. It was hateful. The very dull thud of it was sickening. And there was a bad minute or two when he thought he had killed his opponent. The man had sunk down in his seat, a sodden lump of inanimate human flesh. And Nikky, whose business, in a way, was killing, was horrified.

He tried to find the pulse, but failed—which was not surprising, since he had the wrong side of the wrist. Then the unconscious man groaned. For a moment, as he stood over him, Nikky reflected that he

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was having rather a murderous night of it.

The chauffeur wakened, ten minutes later, to find himself securely tied with his own towing rope, and lying extremely close to the edge of death. Beside him on the ground sat a steady-eyed young man with a cut lip. The young man had lighted a cigarette, and was placing it carefully in the uninjured side of his mouth.

"Just as soon as you are up to it," said Nikky, "we shall have a little talk."

The chauffeur muttered something in the peasant patois of Karnia.

"Come, come!" Nikky observed. "Speak up. No hiding behind strange tongues. But first, I have the letter. That saves your worrying about it. You can clear your mind for action." Suddenly Nikky dropped his mocking tone. To be quite frank, now that the man was not dead, and Nikky had the letter, he rather fancied himself. But make no mistake—he was in earnest, grim and deadly earnest.

"I have a fancy, my friend," he said, "to take that letter of yours on to its destination. But what that destination is, you are to tell me."

The man on the ground grinned sardonically. "You know better than to ask that," he said. "I will never tell you."

Nikky had thought things out fairly well, for him, in that ten minutes. In a business-like fashion he turned the prostrate prisoner on his side, so that he faced toward the chasm. A late moon showed its depth, and the valley in which the Ar flowed swiftly. And having thus faced him toward the next world, Nikky, throwing away his cigarette because it hurt his lip, put a stone or two from the roadway behind his prisoner, and anchored him there. Then he sat down and waited. Except that his ears were burning, he was very calm.

"Any news?" he asked, at the end of ten minutes' unbroken silence.

His prisoner said nothing. He was thinking, doubtless. Weighing things, too, —perhaps life against betrayal, a family against separation.

Nikky examined the letter again. It was addressed to a border town in Livonia. But the town lay far behind them. The address, then, was a false one. He whistled softly. He was not, as a fact, as calm as he looked. He had never thrown a man over a precipice before, and he disliked the idea. —Fortunately, his prisoner did not know this. Besides, suppose he did push him over? Dead men are extremely useless about telling things. It would, as a fact, leave matters no better than before. Rather worse.

Half an hour.

"Come, come," said Nikky, fiercely. "We are losing time." He looked fierce too. His swollen lip did that. And he was nervous. It occurred to him that his prisoner, in desperation, might roll over the edge himself, which would be most uncomfortable.

But the precipice, and Nikky's fierce lip and other things, had got in their work. The man on the ground stopped muttering in his patois, and turned on Nikky eyes full of hate.

"I will tell you," he said. "And you will free me. And after that——"

"Certainly," Nikky replied equably. "You will follow me to the ends of the earth —although that will not be necessary, because I don't intend to go there—and finish me off." Then, sternly: "Now where does the letter go? I have a fancy for delivering it myself."

"If I tell you, what then?"

"This: If you tell me properly, and all goes well, I will return and release you. If I do not return, naturally you will not be released. And, for fear you meditate a treachery, I shall gag you and leave you, not here, but back a short distance, in the wood we just passed. And, because you are a brave man, and this thing may be less serious than I think it is, I give you my word of honor that, if you advise me correctly, I shall return and liberate you."

He was very proud of his plan. He had thought it out carefully. He had everything to gain and nothing to lose by it—except, perhaps, his life. The point was, that he knew he could not take a citizen of Karnia prisoner, because too many things would follow, possibly a war.

"It's a reasonable proposition," he observed. "If I come back, you are all right. If I do not, there are a number of disagreeable possibilities for you."

"I have only your word."

"And I yours," said Nikky.

The chauffeur took a final glance around, as far as he could see, and a final shuddering look at the valley of the Ar, far below. "I will tell you," he said sullenly.

The next instalment of ***"Long Live the King"*** *will appear in the April number.*

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THE BILLY SUNDAY OF THE THEATRE

by Karl Schmidt

Moffett Studio, Chicago.

BAYARD VEILLER.

"YES—call me that. I have just as much right to write as he talks, as he has to preach in the manner I write."

All this refers to the title above and to Bayard Veiller's belief that he, the author of "Within the Law" and "The Thirteenth Chair," and Billy Sunday are old-fashioned exhorters.

"There is nothing new about the revivalist idea. Sunday is like Moody and Sankey. And there is nothing new about the appeal of my plays. I am not trying to pose as a preacher; but I am somewhat like a revivalist because I try to reach people through the basic emotions that are the same everywhere and in all persons. Sunday has as much success in Boston and Philadelphia as he has in the country towns.

"If his appeal were to the intellect, or if his appeal were addressed to the faster-moving minds of his audience, by just so much would he be hampered. So with my plays 'Within the Law' and 'The Thirteenth Chair.'

"I do not make people think in the theatre, and my humor sometimes goes astray, but I play the emotions. If I fail in that, then my play fails."

And Mr. Veiller has known failure. Before he saw "Within the Law" produced he had written thirty plays.

Even after the success of "Within the Law" he tasted more bitter experience—and more discouragement.

Most persons who write one successful play—and to few dramatists has it been given to write a more successful play than "Within the Law"—are, as Claude Elmer Humphreys would say, "on easy street."

But after the discouraging try-out of "Within the Law" in Chicago it seemed best for Veiller to sell his author's interest in "Within the Law," and very little of the money the play earned came to him.

"I am not bitter. I had to do what I did. I had worked for years without making any money. In the five years that 'Within the Law' was running I received only fourteen thousand dollars. Under ordinary circumstances my royalties might well have amounted to a quarter of a million."

Having arrived on Broadway and having been acclaimed, Mr. Veiller had to go back to work instead of ordering a motor.

"The Fight" was produced and shocked a great many persons. The police closed it. Then Mr. Veiller spent a year and a half trying to make a play out of a book of short stories. The play ran a week. "I was more discouraged than I had ever been in those days when I wrote without getting a hearing, and 'Within the Law' was still making money, but not for me."

The late William Harris, whose last production was to be "The Thirteenth Chair," sent for Mr. Veiller. He handed him a check for a thousand dollars. "Take this," he said, "as an advance on your next play."

"But I haven't a thing even planned. I've been working on 'Back Home,' the play that was taken off Saturday."

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"I know. But write something. Write something for Margaret," suggested Mr. Harris.

William Harris had always been interested in the work of Mrs. Veiller—Margaret Wycherly.

When two acts of "The Thirteenth Chair" were ready they were taken to the office of Mr. Harris.

But the playwright did go wrong, and the third act had to be rewritten. Early in November the play opened on the road. About a week after it was brought to New York Mr. Harris died.

"His friends had told him he was too old to go back to producing plays," said Mr. Veiller, "the success" of 'The Thirteenth Chair' delighted him. That my play gave

Maurice Goldberg, New York.

MARGARET WYCHERLY AS *ROSALIE LA GRANGE* IN "THE THIRTEENTH CHAIR."

"You can't go wrong, Bayard. We'll produce the play in the fall, and Margaret shall be *Rosalie La Grange*," was Mr. Harris's only comment.

him this happiness will always be gratifying to me, as he was my best friend in the lean years which followed my success as the writer of 'Within the Law.'"

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It has so often been pointed out by commentators on things of the theatre that Mr. Veiller's plays lack philosophy and the literary quality. Mr. Veiller pleads guilty. He points out, however, that millions of persons know *Mary Turner* (the heroine of "Within the Law"), and few persons remember the name of *Sophy Fullgarney* (the heroine of "The Gay Lord Quex"). Yet the author of "Within the Law" and "The Thirteenth Chair" thinks that the Pinero play had the literary quality which his own work lacks.

"The Thirteenth Chair" starts with a murder—the murder of a man who has nothing to do with the action of the play. It is the manner of his death rather than the fact itself which is of importance.

The friend of one of the characters in the play is found with a knife-wound in his back, but no knife is found. The friend of the murdered man brings a medium to a group of persons interested in spiritualism. It is agreed that he shall ask, as a demonstration of the medium's powers, who killed his friend. Really he is in league with the police, and the medium has consented to go through a rehearsed séance, the idea being that one of the guilty persons is a guest at the house. The thirteen characters sit in a circle in a locked room. The only keys are held by a servant who is outside the door. The hands of the characters are joined and the lights are turned out. The questions agreed upon are asked.

When communication seems established with the supposed spirit of the murdered man, there is a cry in the darkness, the lights are hastily turned on, and the character who has been seeking to avenge his friend's death falls dead to the floor with a knife-wound in his back. There is no knife and there is no explanation for the murder.

The police are called, and it is revealed that the medium was sent there with their knowledge. Suspicion rests upon the daughter of the medium, as she knew the first of the men who met his death so mysteriously and was sitting next in the circle to the second to die of a knife-wound. To clear her daughter and to solve the mystery of the two murders becomes the work of *Rosalie La Grange*.

Mr. Veiller often baffles his audience. But he has done this legitimately; never has he resorted to the sort of trick which has been used so often in the last few years. Even when they are alone, the alleged society people in "Cheating Cheaters" keep up the bluff so that they may fool the audience.

Mr. Veiller describes himself as an exhorter through the medium of the old-fashioned but never out-of-fashion melodrama. But he is still somewhat the reporter. He is still writing for a large audience that reads sensation breathlessly and goes to other sources for its philosophy and mirroring of life.

A few years ago it would have been safe to hazard a guess that all the American plays of the future would be written by former newspaper men. To-day this prediction does not seem to have been justified.

"It seems to me now," said Mr. Veiller, that almost any architect could write a play. "It is all a question of foundations, weights and balances. Grant any architect bitter enough experience and he can write a play, I am sure. Once it was newspaper work that seemed the best preparation for playwriting, but newspaper work has changed. The newspapers have changed. They do not want the same sort of thing, and then there is the telegraph and telephone to get the news and to cut into the reporter's work. The reporter to-day doesn't get the opportunity to uncover things the way he did, and there are more persons between his copy and his readers than there were.

"No, I'm not going to buy a new motor. I have money for the first time in my life, and I think that I'll save it."

To Bayard Veiller's credit must be written down that in a season devoid of thrills he has written a play replete with them. More than that, he has provided a chance for Mrs. Veiller to prove what the public has not known—that she is an actress of rare intelligence.

While Bayard Veiller has been writing plays that were not acted, Margaret Wycherly has known the bitter experience of provincial stock companies. She has been told that she could not act by managers who were never loath to string up the electric lights for any new ingénue.

Years ago Bayard Veiller wrote a play called "The Primrose Path." Few persons remember it now, but it was tried out and Margaret Wycherly acted the leading part. In the difficult years that followed, both Mr. and Mrs. Veiller often looked back to that time, and the title of that early play amused them mightily.

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IT WAS A STRANGER, FAULTLESSLY ATTIRED IN A STYLE NOT COMMON TO THE TOWN.

SKIN DEEP

By Bozeman Bulger

ILLUSTRATIONS BY B. J. ROSENMEYER

EDDIE HOPE, expert picker of types for the Dramatic Syndicate—best in all New York, for that matter—stepped out of his private office, made a quick survey of the semi-circle of anxious, homely faces, and disappeared through a door marked "General Manager."

"Might as well issue another call," he announced as the manager looked up from a litter of papers. "Not one of them will do. There isn't a face in the whole bunch that stands out."

"You mean to tell me," the manager inquired with slight irritation, "that out of the eight homeliest women in New York there isn't one ugly enough for this part? Eddie, I'm afraid you're getting too particular."

"Maybe, then, you'd better take a look for yourself," Hope suggested. And being a man of few words, the expert seated himself at a desk in the corner to look over some ample sheets of lithographic billing. The manager went to the reception-room.

The sight that greeted the head of the office was one that always appealed to his sympathy. Here were eight of the professional ugly women of the stage, eagerly awaiting an opportunity to convert their homeliness into money. Dowdiness was their stock in trade.

These women thoroughly understood the effect of first impressions and, being warned of the manager's approach, made hurried attempts at destroying what little evidence of neatness remained in their appearance. Hats were knocked askew, ill-fitting jackets twisted further out of shape, and experienced impressionists even pulled sections of their shirt-waists loose from the bands of their skirts. Hair had been tousled before leaving home, and all of them wore clumsy

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shoes, unpolished, and coarse, wrinkled stockings. Those having gold teeth—the greatest drawback to any one appearing before footlights—made sure of showing them to advantage, or disadvantage. In their eyes, though, gleamed that constant ray of hope—that thing that makes men and women almost starve and still stick to the stage.

The manager questioned some of the women that he might hear their voices. As his inspection continued, the gleams of hope faded. These ugly women had been through the mill before.

Without a word of encouragement the manager finally walked out of the room and to Eddie Hope. "You had it right, Eddie," he admitted; "they won't do. You'll have to send for Carrie. You've had notice, I believe, that she is available?"

"Yes, but it will cost a lot of money," the expert replied.

"I understand that," the manager agreed, "but we've got to have the right woman for this part, or the show'll be a bust. Never mind what it costs," he added savagely, "Get Carrie on the phone."

"Don't you think we'd better consult——"

"Never mind about him now. Carrie says she won't work with him any longer, and sent us the tip two days ago. She comes high, but we've got to have her and that's all there is to it."

The disappointed ones, dismissed, filed out of the reception-room, stopping at the dressing-table to rearrange their dowdy dress and add a few touches here and there that womanly instinct could not resist. It was a pathetic procession—women who had met with failure even after having to exploit their ugliness for a livelihood.

In an hour an agent assured the syndicate that Carrie would take the job at five-hundred dollars a week, though he had not seen her since the day before. That made the important production possible.

Eddie Hope and the general manager went out to lunch, satisfied. The best ugly woman in the business was on the job. Or so they thought.

But things transpired during that luncheon—things that pricked the thin skin of ugliness and changed the odd career of Carrie Lockwood; things that upset theatrical plans. An hour is a long time, but none too long. While Eddie and the manager are having their bite to eat, let us go back to the little town of Dellwood and begin life with this strange girl. We can meet them as they come out, possessed of a better understanding.

THE mistakes of Nature are understood and tolerated, perhaps, because they serve as exceptions to the rule. If we saw no malformations in animal or vegetable life it is likely that we should not appreciate the beauties of perfection. But the cruelty of Nature is incomprehensible. It exists, nevertheless.

To this day the people of Dellwood can not understand why the buoyant, happy, intelligent spirit of Carrie Lockwood was blighted at birth by an ugliness almost repulsive. There was never another ugly woman in the Lockwood family as far back as four generations. Her father was handsome and the mother a recognized beauty. There was absolutely no reason for it.

As a little girl in pinafores, Carrie Lockwood was so homely as to be the butt of all the cruel jokes of childhood. If the tiny ones needed a bugaboo in their games Carrie was always it. She grew up to accept this as a condition and, despite it, her irrepressible good nature and sense of humor made her popular. The child may have shed tears when alone, but nobody—not even her mother—ever knew it. Carrie was too bright not to have realized the cruelties of her heritage. She was also too considerate of the enjoyment of her playmates to make herself a burden.

Mr. Lockwood died when Carrie was but an ugly little tot. The widowed mother was provided with enough funds to live in fair comfort and educate the daughter, but she knew the time would come when Carrie would have to contribute. Marriage, she figured, was out of the question.

Carrie didn't grow up—she shot up. At eighteen she was nearly six feet tall and was compelled to wear long dresses far ahead of the fixed time, to avoid displaying the start of a pair of legs that looked like beanpoles. Her hips were painfully angular and her waist was flat and square. In summer dress, when the sleeves are either short or diaphanous, her arms seemed like pieces of white rope, knotted at the wrists and elbows. Carrie's chest was flatter than that of a skinny boy, and the lower part of her neck was red and bumpy.

No girl ever loved dainty articles of

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apparel more than Carrie Lockwood, but the things that were her joy she could not wear. They only served to accentuate her ugliness. No color would suit her complexion—if it could be called that—and no finery could soften the harshness of her face. It was impossible to get a shade of cloth or ribbon to match her bulging eyes, which reminded one, for all the world, of grapes with the skins peeled off.

The one redeeming feature, of the looks of this freakish girl, was the expression of her eyes when animated. Out of them came humor, intelligence, and sweetness. And that, I believe, was the real secret of her dramatic ability.

The theatre was always a fascination to Carrie, and her efforts in the amateur affairs of the town were likewise a fascination to our younger set. She had a most remarkable memory, and the learning of a part was as child's play to her. Through eagerness to exercise her gift in that direction she would even memorize all the other parts. Carrie saved several of our assaults on the drama by being able to prompt those who made slips, either through stage-fright or sheer forgetfulness. To have an amateur play in Dellwood without her was impossible.

SHE WENT INTO HYSTERICS AND HAD TO BE TAKEN HOME BY HER MAID.

Unfortunately, Carrie always had to play character parts, such as old women, disappointed old maids, washwomen, or viragos. During rehearsals she would often amuse herself and, incidentally, add to the success of the coming performance, by instructing the ingénue in the way that part should be played. She even stood the cruel laughs without a whimper when it became necessary for the leading man to call her his "beautiful lily of the valley."

It was early in October, as nearly as I can recall, when the Booth Stock Company came to Dellwood for a week, the engagement including the production of three stock plays. It must have been October, for it was during the chestnut-hunting season, when these outdoor parties are a phase of the social life of our younger set. I remember that on the night of the arrival of the Booth Company several of us young fellows had gone up-town to buy some food knickknacks

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for a picnic the next day. We had stopped in the hotel office for a chat with Jeff Nabors, the clerk. In addition to directing the affairs of the Robinson House—American plan, two dollars a day and up—Jeff was distributing agent, self-appointed, for all small talk in Dellwood, social, domestic, and otherwise. When he was on duty the Robinson was a favorite hanging-out place for the boys, and I understand it still is.

"The show folks are in," Jeff was telling us when we turned at the sound of some one coming hurriedly down the wooden stairs. It was a stranger, a man faultlessly attired in a style of clothing not common to the town. "That's him—the leading man—James Gifford," Jeff informed us in a half-whisper. "Nice fellow, too."

"Pardon me," said Mr. Gifford, approaching our group and addressing Nabors, the clerk, "but can you get a doctor right quick?"

We had just seen "Doc" Duncan across the street at the drug-store, and one of the boys volunteered to go for him.

"Anything serious?" inquired Nabors as the actor waited with us.

"Our leading character woman, Miss Simpson, is ill," Mr. Gifford replied." Had some kind of a fainting spell—overwork, I guess. She's been playing two shows a day and memorizing another late at night. Too much for anybody. Working in stock is slavery—simply slavery, that's all."

"Doc" Duncan came in less than five minutes, and the leading man ushered him to the room where other women members of the company were attending the stricken actress, as best they could. Mr. Gifford did not remain, knowing that his presence in the sick-room was neither needed nor desired; he returned to thank us.

"It was very kind of you," he said to the young man who had gone for the doctor. "Not that I wish in any way to reimburse any one for kindness, but would you gentlemen honor us with your presence at the first performance, as my guests?"

We all nodded, and he began writing out a pass.

"By the way," he asked, looking up from the little pad in his hand, "do you happen to have such a thing in this town as an ugly girl or woman who can act?"

Each of us waited for the other to speak, all thinking the same thing.

"Looks as if we had to have a character woman—anybody will do to tide us over," Gifford explained. "I know Miss Simpson will not be able to appear."

And at that moment Doc Duncan came down the steps to confirm that belief. He advised Gifford to get a substitute immediately.

"There's one girl in this town that I know can act," spoke up Nabors, "but she's an amateur and—and—she's ugly all right. She had intended going to a chestnut-hunting picnic to-morrow, though."

"Society girl?" the actor inquired, interested.

"Yes," said Nabors, the rest of us nodding acquiescence, "you might call her that; but she's the best-hearted thing in the world, and I'll lay a bet right now that if it is necessary to help a sick woman she can learn a part in three hours."

"Put me in communication with her," Gifford requested. "It's imperative that I see her to-night."

I went to the telephone and called up Carrie Lockwood. When the situation was explained she consented to have Mr. Gifford come to see her right away. I went along.

Even gratitude and years of schooling in politeness could not hide Gifford's expression of shock as he was presented to Carrie. I know he had never seen such a homely girl in all his life. But if Miss Lockwood sensed his thoughts she gave no sign of it.

In great detail they went over the requirements of the rôle, Gifford laughing frequently at Carrie's questions. The character to be portrayed was that of an educated woman who, through drink, had drifted down and down until she had become the foil of a sneak-thief.

Mind you, Carrie had never seen a woman of that kind in her life. That a woman could drink intoxicants was to her incomprehensible, and the nearest she had come to knowledge of a sneak-thief was in her reading of the better detective stories.

"The rehearsal is at noon to-morrow," Gifford told her. "We have no matinée the first day, you know."

"I may ruin your play, being an amateur," she reminded him, "but I'll be there for a trial, providing you will permit me an escort."

At this he smiled but consented. I was to be the escort.

Nobody will ever know when and how

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Carrie Lockwood memorized that part, but when we showed up at the town theatre the next day she was letter-perfect. There were only nine pages, or "sides," as Gifford called the typewritten sheets; but even five "sides" would be difficult to many professionals knowing nothing of the rest of the play.

Carrie was introduced to members of the company, and, with a lot of side glances and giggling from members of the troupe, the rehearsal got under way.

"Your first cue, Miss Lockwood, is 'throw him out,' given by Edwards here," the leading man told her.

"Yes, I know," she replied. "I enter just as you grab the sneak-thief by the collar."

Gifford was surprised, and his surprise grew into amazement as the company laboriously went through the "business." Carrie Lockwood had perfectly committed to memory every cue and every line. The dreaded work of breaking in a new woman, usually regarded as torture by stock companies, was not such a terrible thing after all.

By nightfall everybody in town knew of the coming event. Every seat in the house, except the free ones given to us, had been sold.

Details may be tiring, so let me wind it up by saying that Carrie Lockwood played that part as if born to it. She must have been excited, but if any flushes came to her face they were hidden under the grease paint, deftly put on with the assistance of the ingénue. Not once did our amateur falter. At the termination of Carrie's every scene the audience almost tore up the theatre with the handclapping in the parquet and the stamping of the boys up in the peanut gallery. A local girl was making good!

Unwittingly James Gifford had happened upon a drawing card of unusual strength. It was the best business week of the trip. Miss Simpson did not rally for the next play, and Carrie took her part in that. During the week she learned and appeared in three rôles. Yes, and she got away with them all. The Booth Stock Company made a financial clean-up.

James Gifford appealed to Mrs. Lockwood to permit her daughter to take up the stage as a permanent profession. As a character woman he saw a great future for her. Tactfully he refrained from mentioning the obstacle that would prevent Carrie from ever becoming a star—a leading woman; but the old lady and her daughter both understood. They would think about the idea of Carrie's becoming a professional actress later.

Toward the end of the week Miss Simpson recovered, and reported for duty as the Booth Company was leaving Dellwood. Her unbounded gratitude fully repaid Carrie Lockwood for declining to accept any remuneration whatsoever. She had insisted that the unfortunate woman receive her full salary instead.

But Gifford, an excellent man as well as an excellent actor, did not permit sincere thanks to end his appreciation. He sent Miss Lockwood a very pretty gold cross with his name and that of Miss Simpson engraved on the back. It was attached to a tiny threaded necklace, and Carrie wore it despite the knowledge that it would never be seen. Low-neck dresses, you know, were denied her. But the ugly girl cherished that trinket, her one and only present from a man.

Carrie Lockwood did not go with the Booth Stock Company, but the stage germ had been successfully planted. It grew rapidly. Within five years our Dellwood prodigy had appeared in some of the biggest theatrical attractions sent out of New York. The demand for her services was constant. Her salary had gone as high as three hundred a week. She had even appeared as the ugly woman in musical comedy.

But as the years went by Carrie was not content. On a trip to the old town one summer she confided to me that her life would be empty until she had played a real dramatic part on Broadway.

"It would be easy," she explained pathetically, "if I could play a sympathetic rôle like that of leading lady or ingénue, but they pay me because—because of—my looks. . . . It must be wonderful, Joe, to be pretty and still able to act." The hopelessness of her tone hurt.

Despite her ugliness, Carrie's face, as she grew older, had taken on a look of resigned sweetness, her eyes fairly blazing with intellect and artistic understanding. The one thing she yearned for, I knew, was a chance at romance. This I also knew would be denied her. In all her activities on the stage she had never played a part wherein even the thought of love had entered. Such a suggestion would have been funny, and a laugh of that kind spells ruin to any production.

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I understand these things because I also went into the theatrical business as I reached manhood, and had an office in New York. Frequently I heard gossip of this and that actor's trying to get sweet on Carrie Lockwood, and of how she spurned them all. I knew, and she knew, that such admiration was affected for the sole purpose of helping her spend her three hundred a week. No rich men called on Carrie.

In her art, though, she was happy. Her love for the dainty things of life was indulged to her heart's content. She had an uptown apartment of her own, exquisite in appointments. I dined there often.

One afternoon Carrie called at my office to talk over old days at Dellwood. She stayed more than an hour, perhaps. After she had gone I was telling my partner of her interesting career when, suddenly, the ugly girl herself returned, aflame with excitement. I had never seen her so, and for a moment I was startled.

"Who do you suppose I have just seen, Joe?" she demanded. "You couldn't guess in a year. Who do you think?"

I shook my head and gave it up, just as she wished.

"James Gifford! . . . And he's looking just as handsome as when he came to Dellwood that time with the Booth Stock Company—remember?"

"Certainly I remember. And he stopped for a talk, did he? Since he became the big star and got so rich I had an idea that he was very much upstage."

"Not a bit of it!" she exclaimed. "Seemed as glad to see me as if I had been a long-lost sister. He looked considerably older and more dignified, but——"

"All right, go on and rave," I bantered through the flurry of enthusiasm, "but what's the answer? What happened?"

"I know you are going to jump right out of that chair, but listen and I'll tell you. He's anxious to have me play the leading character part in his new Broadway production! Thinks I'll be a hit!"

"At what price?"

"Well, if you insist on being inquisitive," she laughingly replied, "he offered me five hundred a week and a two years' contract. . . . Said he'd been trying to locate me for several months. . . . Never has forgotten that old performance at Dellwood."

"But he won't let you dress up?"

I was sorry I said that. Carrie's face lost its animation. She knew what I meant, though I had hoped she would not.

"No," she said. "Not that. I'm to be uglier than ever, but it's a chance for an artistic triumph."

"Did you take it?"

"I can't give him an answer until I've seen my manager—you know I'm under contract now with the Dramatic Syndicate; but as there's no production in sight they might let me go. Of course I couldn't sign a new contract."

I told her I could fix that. I knew that a manager would be glad to be relieved of such a high-priced artist, temporarily, at least. I reached for the telephone. In a minute or so I was able to tell Carrie that she could go as far as she liked—for six weeks, anyway. After that the Syndicate might need her.

That night I accidentally ran into James Gifford and Carrie Lockwood dining together in a Broadway restaurant. There couldn't be anything pretty about Carrie, but her homely face was alight with pleasure. A man had taken her out to dinner who really wanted to dine with her for companionship. I tried to figure that it might be purely business, but their looks belied that thought.

IN JAMES GIFFORD'S new play Carrie Lockwood was to have the part of a sort of combined maid and social secretary to a baroness, a rôle played by Anna Devereaux, Gifford's leading woman. This baroness, decidedly shy on beauty herself, always insisted (in the play) on having the homeliest secretary possible, that she might shine by comparison. And this casting of characters had been admirably done. Anna Devereaux, though famous as a leading woman, was never considered unusually pretty and she needed all the contrast found in Carrie.

It was a most difficult rôle, this ugly secretary, because the actress playing it had to carry the brunt of the plot without once becoming likable or attractive. The secretary was really the brains of the baroness and directed her employer's every move in the love-affair with the character played by Gifford. If I remember aright, in the play he was called *Le Comte de Viscagny*, or something like that. Anyway, I'll call him Gifford. It's easier to spell.

Carrie Lockwood slid into the character

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JUST BACK OF GIFFORD'S CHAIR STOOD CARRIE LOCKWOOD VIEWING THE SCENE.

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of secretary and settled herself for the long grind of rehearsal. She knew the whole play by heart within a week, the director never having to "give her a line" except when changes were made in the manuscript by Jimmy Wildring, the author.

She had her troubles, though. Miss Devereaux developed temperament before they had gone a week—a plain desire to be unpleasant is really what it was—and the whole cast, including Gifford, had to humor her. Even when everything had assumed smooth-running shape there came an eruption because of Miss Devereaux's insistence that she be billed with prominence equal to that of Gifford himself. She expressed herself as tired of being merely his leading lady—a support. After two days of wrangling among star, leading lady, and managers a compromise was reached by which she was to get on the bill in secondary type; and that was a great deal more than Anna Devereaux had ever had in her life and fully as much as she deserved. But she continued peevish, and frequently tried to take it out on the unassuming Miss Lockwood.

Gifford's cordial manner and apparent friendship for Carrie grated on Miss Devereaux's nerves for no other reason than an inborn selfish regret at the success of others. By degrees she worked up a dislike for the homely girl and missed no opportunity to heckle her in rehearsal. She frequently rebuked Carrie for "stepping on her lines" or ruining a possible laugh by awkward movements. Gifford, at all times intensely fair and considerate, stood this for a while, but members of the troupe knew that, eventually, his temper would come to the surface. It came in the middle of a scene that had been repeatedly rehearsed as to the "business," and just that many times ruined on account of Anna's petulance and criticism of Carrie.

"You will have to be more considerate of Miss Lockwood," he told Miss Devereaux, "or we will never get this production ready. She is extremely important to our success."

"Apparently more than I am," Anna retorted with what she meant for withering sarcasm.

Gifford looked at her coldly. "And even that statement is not far amiss, Miss Devereaux."

That was the spark that set off the explosion. It broke up the afternoon's rehearsal. It was the first real call-down Anna had received since becoming a leading lady. She went into hysterics—stage hysterics, of the common type—and had to be taken home by her maid. But Gifford did not relent.

"Would you mind, Miss Lockwood, reading through Miss Devereaux's lines?" he called to Carrie as the others were leaving. "It will help me to get my lines set. I'm a bad rehearser, you know."

Carrie gladly helped him out. She needed no manuscript, speaking the lines of the *Baroness* without the slightest reference to the typewritten part. She worked patiently for nearly two hours, reading the *Baroness's* part and going through scene after scene in business. It was tiring and she showed it.

"It was very kind of you to do this," Gifford said to her as they were finishing up. "It's really too much of a strain on you, and I've been very selfish in asking you to do the work of two."

"It's a pleasure," she told him. "It's interesting to assume a new part, even if I may never be able to say the lines before an audience."

"If Miss Devereaux felt that way," he remarked, "I would be very happy indeed. I suppose she's deeply offended?"

"Yes, and I'm sorry that it was all on my account."

"It's for that very reason that she should be reprimanded. Otherwise, I fear she would make it very unpleasant for you. . . . You will dine with me, Miss Lockwood? I'm unusually lonely to-night."

I saw them at a French restaurant two hours later, but was careful not to let them see me. In a secluded corner they looked too cozy for interruption.

Anna Devereaux did not recover from her reprimand. Instead it helped in the development of an intense dislike for the star. During the out-of-town trial performances Gifford discovered with genuine alarm that this dislike had reached a point where Anna would no longer prompt him if he missed a line—a failing that frequently embarrassed him. The fear of making slips preyed on his nerves, and for that very reason he began to make them. On occasions Miss Lockwood came to the rescue when she happened to be in the scene, but such opportunities were infrequent.

Gifford's sincere appreciation of these little kindnesses and his delicate consideration of her feelings at all times—more than

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professional courtesy called for—formed a bright spot in Carrie's life. She found herself longing to do things just to hear him thank her, and for some reason the thought frightened her.

As the days went by, James Gifford began to mean more to this homely woman than he suspected or than she would have admitted, even to herself. Those unexpected occasions when he wished to dine with her were awaited with well-concealed eagerness. Carrie, gazing at herself in the mirror at home, was afraid to think the thoughts that other girls might have cherished.

When I say she was afraid to think them I believe I am right, but, mind you, I am not saying that she did not think them.

The first hint that Carrie was like other women—that she possessed femininity, or whatever you call it—came during the last week of a series of rehearsals that had been called in New York, prior to the big opening. One night she called me on the phone, asking that I come to her apartment at once. Her voice seemed unusually agitated.

"Joe," she announced as soon as I had my hat off, "I want you to locate Mr. Gifford as soon as you can—to-night, if possible—and find out if he would object to my having an understudy."

My look must have expressed my amazement.

"I mean it," she declared. "Something tells me that I may fail—that I may suddenly fall ill—that—Oh, I don't know what it is—I feel that something is going to happen."

"Whoa! Just a minute!" I laughingly remarked. "This isn't like you, Carrie. You're nervous."

"Nervous? Yes, that's it—nervous"—and she laughed unnaturally. "I should say I am! Do you know, Joe, I haven't slept for two nights—can't eat! Oh, I don't know—" The girl actually began to weep hysterically.

"Why, old girl," I tried to comfort her. "I'm afraid you're not well. What's it all about?"

"I'm not an invalid by any means," she retorted, "but—but you can't understand. . . . I'm so anxious about this play. . . . Don't you know Mr. Gifford is liable to miss his lines at any minute—that I may not be there to prompt him? . . . Oh, there are many things—I simply must have an understudy. I can't afford to let anything go wrong. It would ruin Mr. Gifford. . . . I'll pay the understudy myself if necessary."

Plainly Carrie was a different woman. Nervously she rose and sat down again, only to jump up and pace to and fro across the room. She was not attired for the street but wore one of those tea-gowns, house dresses, or whatever they are called. From a slender necklace around her partly bared neck there was suspended a small gold cross. Constantly she fumbled at this, twisting it around the tiny chain until finally the trinket broke loose and fell to the floor. Carrie blushed as she picked up the little cross, evidently conscious for the first time that she had been handling it.

I began to get an inkling as to what was the matter with this friend of my boyhood days. In fact, I think I knew better than she did.

"Why, certainly, Gifford will consent to your having an understudy," I told her; "but not if he thinks you have any idea of leaving the show."

"You don't think he would?" she asked anxiously. "Do you really think he likes me—in the part?"

That was enough tip-off for me. When a girl begins asking a friend questions like that, knowing the answer already, she simply wants to hear somebody else say the things aloud that she's been trying to say to herself. And far be it from me to disappoint one of them! I gave her all that she was looking for, which was the only way. I told her that Gifford thought her the best character actress in the world; that he thought her intellectually charming—oh, I told her enough at least to make her enjoy a good night's sleep. And I wasn't lying too much at that.

I found Gifford at the club, and when I informed him that Miss Lockwood wanted an understudy his usually well-controlled features assumed an expression of dismay.

"She has no intention of withdrawing from the cast?" he inquired quickly.

I told him that I did not think so; that it was merely a nervous spell.

"Certainly, she can have *two* understudies if she wishes them," he said. "But tell me, is she worried for fear she won't make good?"

"Oh, no," I replied. "Candidly, I'm under the impression that her worry is on your account. She is all worked up over your success and wants to take no chances

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on anything going wrong. . . . She has never forgotten the time Miss Simpson fell ill in Dellwood—remember?"

I watched him closely to see how this shot had landed. It made a bull's-eye.

"Ah-h-h!" he breathed in true actor style. "But why," he asked, "didn't she send for me? I haven't seen her for several days except during rehearsal, and I've really missed her. Dear soul to be concerned about me, isn't she? . . . But why not call me?"

"She has just sent me to see you," I explained. "She didn't feel as though she should ask you to call—I'm an old family friend, you know!"

"Ah-h-h! That's delightful, isn't it? Very pretty custom. I'm stupid, old fellow. I knew there was something different about Miss Lockwood. I wonder if I could call her now?"

It was still early and the telephone was at his elbow. I shoved it toward him.

In just two mintes James Gifford, esthetic actor of Broadway renown, almost rudely took his departure, leaving me to gaze into his highball glass, the contents of which had not been touched!

CARRIE'S understudy was a "quick study," as we call them in stage lingo. In a pinch she could have gone on in two days. Unfortunately, though, she was good-looking—much too pretty for the part. Frequently I saw Carrie look at this new woman wistfully as the understudy explained how she could make up ugly enough to be convincing. Carrie, you know, never used or needed a particle of pigment, other than the rouge necessary to offset the glare of the footlights.

Less than a week before the New York opening I happened to pass the front of the theatre and stopped dead in my tracks. I sensed trouble. There on the house billing was the name of James Gifford conspicuously displayed and, beneath it, a subline in small type reading:

"Supported by a strong cast, including Anna Devereaux."

I could not restrain a smile as curiosity led me into the pit to see what I knew would happen. It had happened already.

James Gifford, seated in a "prop" chair on the stage, was listening to a tirade from Anna Devereaux while managers, press-agents, and booking men ran around in circles. In the edge of the wings, just back of Gifford's chair, stood Carrie Lockwood, viewing the scene in open-mouthed wonder.

"You may as well announce a postponement of the opening," Anna half screamed at the producers as she turned from Gifford. "Unless that billing is changed I don't go on, and that's all there is to it. You can't say that I didn't warn you in advance. . . . It's utterly absurd that I, a leading woman, should be practically ignored. I've been too long in the business to stand for that."

"Why not go ahead, Miss Devereaux," one of them suggested, "and let us see about the billing later? You know this firm and Mr. Gifford have never yet postponed an opening."

"You'll postpone this one," she replied with cutting emphasis, "and unless I am treated with more courtesy you may have to kill the production permanently. I'm not so certain that I wish to be in your employ at all."

The more Miss Devereaux talked the more excited she grew. Finally, in a burst of anger, she threw the manuscript that she had been holding in her hand at Mr. Gifford and flirted toward her dressing-room, glaring at Carrie, who happened to be in her path.

Gifford, the esthetic, paled at the insult.

"Miss Devereaux!" he called, and the leading woman stopped. A look akin to victory that glowed in her excited face quickly faded as he added: "You need never return!"

The managers threw up their hands in helplessness. Even the star had contracted temperament.

"Call a rehearsal for two o'clock," Gifford instructed the director.

Everybody turned in surprise. It was then almost noon.

"Oh, Mr. Harris," the star called to the leading member of the firm, "see if you can find the author and have him here within an hour."

"But, my dear man," demurred Mr. Harris, "we can't go ahead without Miss Devereaux. It's out of the question to find another woman now."

"Kindly leave that to me, Mr. Harris. I haven't failed you in the past and I won't now. Be here for the rehearsal, will you?"

Being of the family, in a way, I waited to see what would happen.

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As the others filed out, Gifford turned to Carrie, inquiringly. Her face was set in determination. I had seen her that way as a girl.

"It's a lot of presumption on my part," I heard her saying, "but if you think the chance worth taking, I'll try—but if I fail——"

"I'll take the consequences. . . . By the way, here's the author."

Harris had found Jimmy Wildring at the main office, and the playwright hurried over. The three of them went to lunch. . . .

The curtain went up on the dress rehearsal as if nothing had occurred to mar the morning's work. As usual in those plays that deal with foreign nobility, the scene opened with a maid—the secretary, in this case—dusting off the furniture in the living-room of the country place. And Carrie's understudy was the maid.

The group of managers and hangers-on had not been taken into the confidence of Gifford and Wildring, and this sudden shift paved the way for the bigger surprise. We awaited it with as much suspense as if the play had been entirely new to us. And we were not disappointed.

Rapidly the players went into the action of the piece, and the first real scene disclosed Carrie Lockwood in the rôle of *Baroness!*

"Great Scott, man," Harris whispered to the author, "you can't do that! An ugly woman in the part would ruin it."

Wildring merely smiled and motioned for Harris to keep quiet. Then we saw. During that hour's conference at luncheon Carrie Lockwood, Gifford, and the author had made a unique shift in the plot by merely changing three or four lines. It seemed incredible that such a thing could be done, but there it was, as simple as you please.

Instead of a good-looking baroness and an ugly secretary, some subtle mind had conceived the notion of having an ugly baroness and a pretty secretary, the change making the success of the noblewoman all the more compelling. It was remarkable in that no one had thought of it before.

"It was entirely the idea of Miss Lockwood," Wildring whispered to the group about him. "Don't give me any credit. That homely woman showed us the way."

There is no need of my trying to tell you how that girl could act. Those who saw the first night's performance will never forget it. Even in the first rehearsal of the love-scene Carrie electrified us. She knew every line of the manuscript and her interpretation of the author's idea showed something akin to genius. Jimmy Wildring was delighted.

We got our first inkling of Carrie's real power when Gifford began his romantic courtship. Her eyes flamed with a new light. Though the love of the *Baroness* for the *Comte* was supposed to be apparent, the repression with which Miss Lockwood held it in check was wonderful—tenfold more convincing than the vapid, ranting outpouring of words by Anna Devereaux. And all through the scene Carrie, with artistic subtlety, managed to convey to us a realization of her lack of beauty. The climax, her final avowal of love for the dissolute *Comte*, fairly lifted us from our feet. Its power lay in the striking contrast to her former repression. The managers violated a stage tradition by actually applauding at rehearsal. It was a genuine expression of enthusiasm.

As I watched the play accumulate its interest with scene after scene between the great Gifford and Carrie Lockwood, I saw something that was lost on the others. Carrie was not acting! It was real! For the first time in her life, either in reality or in make-believe, a man had made love to her; had taken her in his arms and kissed her!

With the new experience the whole soul of this homely body had gone into the play. At the end she was exhausted. In her dressing-room she refused to see Gifford or any of the managers who had sought to congratulate her. But she sent for me, her friend of childhood. I found her in hysterics.

"They must get another woman immediately," she called to me before I had taken a seat. "I can not—I will not play it! Tell Mr. Harris that I will see him later, Joe. Tell him he must secure a leading woman."

I was dumfounded. But there was no use in argument. I knew that Carrie Lockwood meant exactly what she said and that she would do exactly as she said.

"Joe," she said after I had calmed her down by diverting the conversation back to the old days in Dellwood, "I want you to call up the Dramatic Syndicate and tell them that I am available; that I'm ready to resume my contract in case they have anything now."

"But they've given you a release," I

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"THIS TIME YOU CAN NOT DENY ME THE PRIVILEGE OF CONGRATULATING YOU."

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reminded her, at the same time giving up this queer twist of her mind as a hopeless puzzle.

"I know," she said, "but that was merely to give me a chance in the off-season. Do as I tell you, will you?"

There being no alternative, I immediately put her name on the available list of the Dramatic Syndicate.

Harris was knocked off his pins. He could not understand it and I had to assure him doubly that Carrie meant what she said before he would make a move. Later she saw him personally and, without giving any reason, renewed her request.

That night I saw Gifford at the club. The poor fellow was all upset. Repeatedly he had called up Carrie, asking the privilege of calling, but she steadfastly stuck to her plea of a headache and would not see him. Gifford raved so about her acting that I hadn't the heart to tell him of her decision to withdraw from the cast. Cowardly though it may have been, I left that job to Harris.

And I learned later that Harris never did tell him. The new woman was secured and Carrie spent her every idle hour at the apartment drilling her into the rôle of the *Baroness*. This was aided materially by the woman's being permitted to watch Carrie in the final rehearsals.

Carrie had absolute confidence in the ability of the new woman. So much so, in fact, that she told Mr. Harris she would play the part for a week herself in case there was the slightest objection to her successor.

"But the opening performance?" I asked her one afternoon. "What about that?"

"Oh, for his sake"—she meant Gifford—"I told Mr. Harris I would play that. I thought I told you that when I first asked you to see my old managers. You know Mr. Gifford knows nothing of this new woman, and a surprise like that at the first performance would ruin him. But listen, Joe," she added, "I can not and I will not appear in this rôle regularly. I couldn't stand it."

At last it began to dawn on me why she had refused to see Gifford.

To describe that opening performance of Wildring's new play would be merely to recount what we saw at the dress rehearsal. Carrie was so good that she almost divided honors with the famous matinée idol, Gifford. Her work in the emotional scene was strong enough to arouse the most callous critics. They hailed her as a coming star, though none failed to fling a little quip at Miss Lockwood's looks.

During the climactic scene in which the *Baroness* admitted her love for the *Comte*, there was an added touch to Carrie's acting, not a part of the original direction. When the *Comte* asked her to be his wife the homely *Baroness* burst into a fit of weeping.

She struggled away from him, and, the upper part of her gown becoming disarranged, something—a gold trinket it was—caught on a button of Gifford's coat. The slender chain that held it separated, and left the tiny cross hanging there.

"Not too strong! Not too strong!" Gifford cautioned her in an aside, as he removed the trinket and held it in his hand. "Tone down a little."

But this only added to her hysteria, and finally Carrie left the stage sobbing, while the audience applauded wildly. They did not know.

When all was done and the play had gone over big, Miss Lockwood made a bolt for her dressing-room; but this time Gifford was not to be denied. Close behind her he came and caught the door as it was in the act of slamming. The rest of us had to wait.

"It was wonderful!" we heard him exclaim. "This time you can not deny me the privilege of congratulating you. With this we can make our fortune."

"You can, yes," she replied, "but it's not for me. I can not—I will not play it, Mr. Gifford."

"You mean—you mean to say that you're through?" he gasped.

"There is another woman ready," she informed him, "and I turn it over to her after to-night."

"But why, but why?"—his tone was full of distress. "I demand that you tell me why. Have I offended you—has anybody offended you?"

"I have offended myself," she replied in a low, wavering voice. "I have—I have never been made love to before. It is mockery. It's not acting—I——"

"You mean, you mean——"

"I mean that I lost control of myself—that—oh, you can't understand! I wish I were dead!"

That poor simpleton of a bachelor must have caught on then. He must have looked at the little gold cross, on the back of which his name was engraved. At any rate, he

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moved nearer to her, and that was the last heard by those of us waiting in the runway outside the door.

EDDIE HOPE and the general manager of the Dramatic Syndicate returned from luncheon still content. In ten minutes, though, the smug look of satisfaction had left their faces. The warning came in a ring of the telephone. Eddie answered it.

"It's James Gifford," he said to the manager as he turned from the mouthpiece.

"Is that you, Mr. Hope?" the voice inquired over the wire.

"Yep, this is Hope. What's the idea?"

"I understand you've been trying to engage an ugly woman, and I fear you've made a serious mistake."

"No mistake about that, Mr. Gifford. We've got a wonder. . . . I hope you don't think we've tried to break up your cast, old man. She told us that she'd withdrawn before we would talk business with her. We've engaged Carrie Lockwood."

Hope was surprised to hear a chuckle from the man he always had thought to be the last word in dignity.

"That's exactly where you've made the mistake," said the voice. "You'd better start another search for ugliness at once."

"What's that? What's that?"—Eddie Hope was getting irritated.

"Why," came the voice of Gifford into his ear, "you've engaged the most beautiful woman in the world. I told her so an hour ago and she knows it's so. I repeated it a half-hour later at the Little Church Around the Corner. Carrie Gifford is going to be my leading lady for life."

SOLDINI, VAUDEVILLE VIOLINIST

BY ELIAS LIEBERMAN

DEAD men may tell no tales, but dead souls can;
For when my turn is done, mine never fails
To torture me with this: "Are you the man
Whom Auer taught? Soldini! Ragging scales!
Are you the boy whom Auer once caressed—
His eyes so teary-soft—to whom he said,
'Have patience, lad; through toil is genius blessed;
Your day will come'?" But night has come instead.
Night after night they clap Soldini—me
Who sold his hopes for dross, his dream for pelf.
They clap Soldini? No! His travesty,
His ghost, perhaps, great God, but not himself.

For gaping dolts I crucify my love.
I syncopate the masters, beat the strings,
Abuse my bow to please the gods above,
The smoking gods, whose rapture stings
Remorse to life again and drives my pride
To penance—fool applause that lays a ban
On hope and calls up all of me that died.

. . . . . .

Dead men may tell no tales but I—I can.

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DRAWINGS BY C. B. FALLS

THE CLIMB OF JOHNNY SPOT

By Harris Dickson

AUTHOR OF "OLD RELIABLE," ETC.

GEORGE WASHINGTON JOHNSON wasn't studying about that white fellow. Wash Johnson had never laid eyes on him, hasn't guessed hide nor hair of the shooter to this good day. Being a solid black, hyphenated, Afro-American citizen, Wash was busy tending twenty acres of cotton when that white fellow commenced projeckin' with a pistol and shot the rations smack out of Brother Johnson's mouth.

It was a teetotally unexpected trigger trick. Wash didn't even see the gunman, the gunman couldn't see him; and it took a long-range pistol to kill Wash Johnson's commissary account at a distance of approximately eight thousand miles. For the shooting took place at Sarajevo in Bosnia, while Wash Johnson was chopping cotton on Colonel Swampwood's plantation in Mississippi.

The same shot incidentally killed an archduke, which might have been proper and regular, as Wash didn't believe in game-laws anyhow. But one harsh word fetched on another, and this started a free-for-all scrap, which finally landed George Washington Johnson right on the front seat of a brand-new automobile.

It required two years, however, before Wash Johnson had fully convalesced from the shock of that ration-snatching shot, and commenced actually running his own "Tin Lizzie," with a grin that advertised every whitewashed tooth he possessed, and a gold-band cigar stuck slantwise in his face. Instead of firing up with corn and steering Old Beck with a plow-line, Wash began tilting his hat to one side and argufying about "steering-gear."

Here was proof that the same cause might produce two effects, although I have skeptically misdoubted the truth of that ancient jingle:

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There was a man in our town
And he was wondrous wise,
He jumped into a bramble-bush
And scratched out both his eyes.
And when he saw his eyes were out,
With all his might and main
He jumped into another bush,
And scratched them in again.

Wash didn't do much jumping — he couldn't tell which way to jump. Even Colonel Swampwood didn't know, and what the colonel didn't know must have been torn out of all the books. But everybody did a powerful lot of scratching; white folks scratched their heads, while niggers scratched the dirt, trying to raise hog and hominy.

It reads like a fairy-tale, how an irresponsible fanatic in Bosnia could shoot the rations out of Wash Johnson's mouth, 'way down in Mississippi; and then, by the erratic course of nigger luck, bestow upon Wash Johnson an automobile that he had never dreamed of owning.

THE story should begin with "Once upon a time," but it doesn't. It starts with a fixed date, July 28, 1914, when a student assassinated the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria. This did not immediately affect the cotton market.

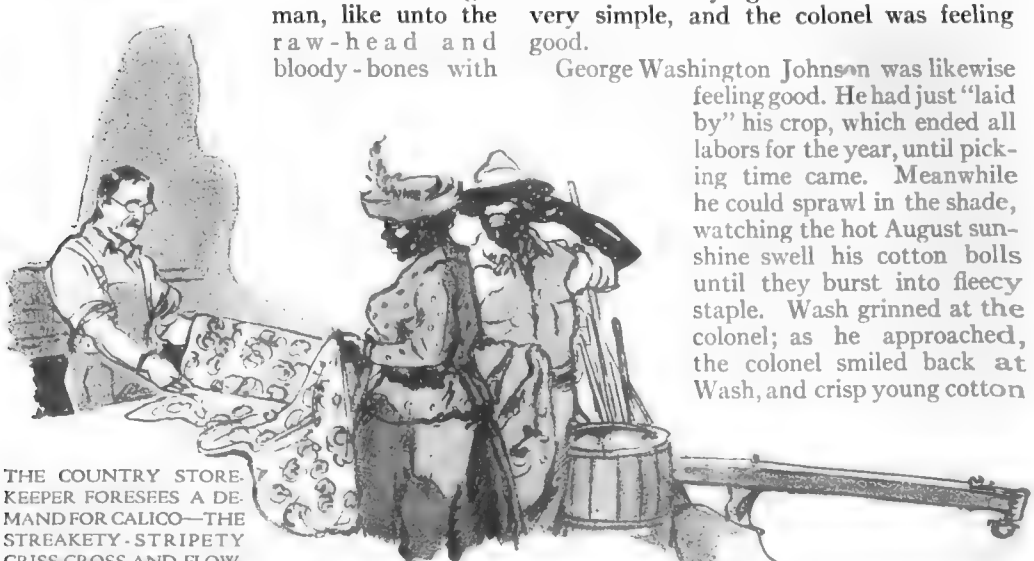
All of his life Colonel Swampwood had felt that whenever foreign mills wanted to pay a little less for his cotton they merely whispered in hoarse and confidential tones, "Europe trembles on the brink of war"—a sort of a bogie man, like unto the raw-head and bloody-bones with which his bandannaed mammy had weaned him from rebellion; and later on these Balkan war-clouds seemed less real than a Zenda romance, a movie-thriller of sword and cloak swashbucklers having no concern with practical affairs.

Despite the wrangling of European diplomats, cotton held its own, the average price per bale for July, 1914, being $67.

July twenty-eighth, just a month after the first shot, Colonel Swampwood sat on his front gallery smiling at a thousand acres of the finest lands that a crow ever flew over. The colonel expected to make between six and seven hundred bales, worth in the neighborhood of forty-five thousand dollars. His tenants would have money to pay their rent and commissary accounts, with cash for pop-corn and toy balloons at Christmas. Thirteen-cent cotton was the fairy godmother who would pacify the colonel's factor, pay the merchant for supplies to feed his tenants, settle with the bank, and clip a large chunk off his mortgage. A planter is a farmer with a mortgage; a farmer is a planter without a mortgage. Colonel Swampwood was a prominent planter.

The colonel eased down in his rocking-chair and resumed inspection of railway folders. His daughters were going away—New York, London, Paris, early winter with friends in Rome—then back to the plantation for a jolly old-fashioned Christmas. His fairy godmother made this very simple, and the colonel was feeling good.

George Washington Johnson was likewise feeling good. He had just "laid by" his crop, which ended all labors for the year, until picking time came. Meanwhile he could sprawl in the shade, watching the hot August sunshine swell his cotton bolls until they burst into fleecy staple. Wash grinned at the colonel; as he approached, the colonel smiled back at Wash, and crisp young cotton



THE COUNTRY STOREKEEPER FORESEES A DEMAND FOR CALICO—THE STREAKETY-STRIPETY CRISS-CROSS AND FLOWERY KIND.

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in the fields nodded happily at them both.

"Good evenin', cunnel."

"Good evening, Wash; what do you want?"

"Cunnel, dese niggers is fixin' to hold a festerval, an' I needs a new suit o' clo'es."

"Why the thunder don't you go get 'em?"

"Dat's what I aims. Gimme a order on de sto', please, suh. An' some shoes, an' a hat—an' things."

"That's right, rig yourself up regardless."

The colonel scribbled a *carte blanche* order, and Wash had already started off with it when Dr. Scott came whirling through the big gate and sprang excitedly from his dust-covered automobile.

Wash remained to hear the news.

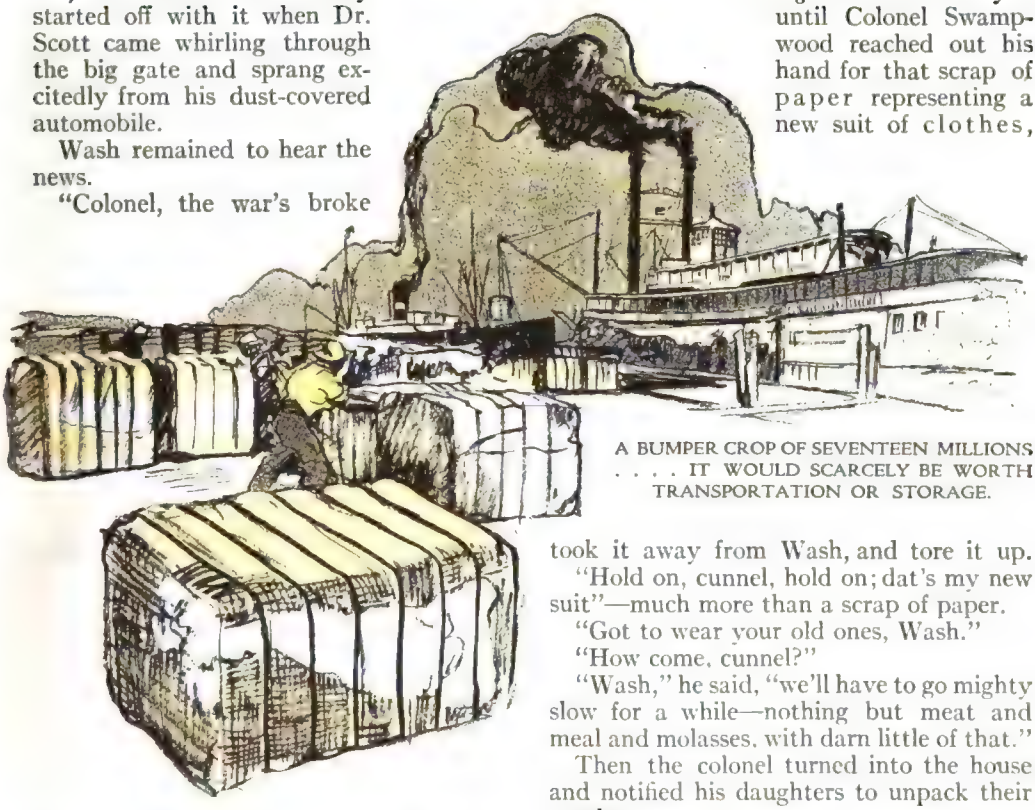
"Colonel, the war's broke out in Europe. It's come like lightning."

"What!"

"Austria has invaded Servia—Russia is mobilizing—Germany and France getting ready to fight—England is coming in, and——"

Wash Johnson stood with eyes and mouth wide open listening to the white folks, without comprehending what they were talking about. They knew that this meant six-cent cotton, five-cent cotton, cotton of no value—blank, hopeless, inevitable ruin.

Ruin to-morrow, or in the vague, uncertain future, signified absolutely nothing to Wash Johnson, so long as he held the colonel's valid order for a brand-new suit of clothes, and the commissary stood open for him to draw his regular rations on Saturday night. Wash had made a pretty good crop, which, at thirteen cents a pound, should pay all his debts, and leave a few dollars for holiday whisky. So Wash never pestered his mind about European conflicts. Calamity never leaked into Wash Johnson's head—that is, impending, *right now* calamity—until Colonel Swampwood reached out his hand for that scrap of paper representing a new suit of clothes,



A BUMPER CROP OF SEVENTEEN MILLIONS . . . . IT WOULD SCARCELY BE WORTH TRANSPORTATION OR STORAGE.

took it away from Wash, and tore it up.

"Hold on, cunnel, hold on; dat's my new suit"—much more than a scrap of paper.

"Got to wear your old ones, Wash."

"How come, cunnel?"

"Wash," he said, "we'll have to go mighty slow for a while—nothing but meat and meal and molasses, with darn little of that."

Then the colonel turned into the house and notified his daughters to unpack their trunks.

Wars and rumors of wars had always depressed the price of cotton. This was worse than rumor: it was a wreck, the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds.

I do not mean that Colonel Swampwood considered nothing beyond his pecuniary interests. Far from it. He had traveled extensively, been educated in Heidelberg, and lived in France. During his boyhood he had experienced all the horrors of war. His great heart was to throb in sympathy with devastated Belgium, for slaughtered Servia, for brave lads slain—the flower of Britain,

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the pick of France, the blond-haired youths of Germany. He was to sicken at the suffering of women, the wail of fatherless babes. We shall not speak of these, only of cotton.

On July 31, 1914, the Stock Exchange closed in New York and London; but what was more vitally harrowing to Colonel Swampwood, the Cotton Exchange suspended in New Orleans, as well as in New York and Liverpool. Within the next few days Europe blazed up like a wind-lashed flame crackling through the dry cane-brake. The Germans smothered Belgium, and it was just as if those khakied columns had gone tramping, tramping, tramping across the colonel's unpicked fields. Monster cannon battering at Liége were also battering down the price of cotton.

And worse: it speedily developed that we were confronting a bumper crop of seventeen millions, instead of fourteen and a half, as had been expected. This unprecedented production could find no outlet. Over sixty per cent. of our crop had formerly been exported, this year fifty-two per cent. These dammed-up millions of bales must now be stored in gin-sheds, stacked in warehouses, or piled upon railroad platforms. It would scarcely be worth transportation or storage. American mills could only nibble at this vast accumulation, and what they spun would be taken at their own price.

The colonel well remembered those middle sixties when Southern ports were blockaded and cotton could not be shipped, while idle mill-hands rioted and starved in Lancashire. He knew what happened then, and feared what must happen now.

THE financial world punctually tied itself into a hard knot. Banks refused to lend money on twenty-dollar gold pieces. Whenever there is a congestion of cotton, there is a corresponding congestion of money, money being mighty susceptible to cold feet. Normal exports—say, nine million bales, at prices prevailing before the war—would bring back more than six hundred million dollars. Whoever does not realize that cotton is a potent factor in national development, need only try to finance a gold-mine in Alaska or a pulp-mill in Maine when this returning flow of Southern cash is shut off. The sudden stoppage of six hundred millions strangled every financial artery in America. It became impossible for promoters to carry out their irrigation schemes in Arizona, just as it became impossible for Colonel Swampwood to pay interest, taxes, and mortgage.

Everything stopped right where it was, everything but cotton, and cotton kept dropping like a drunken man tumbling down a staircase to which there seemed no bottom. Cotton tumbled from thirteen and one-half cents to six and one-half cents, with scattering sales at six cents, five and one-half cents, and even five cents.

Incidentally, it may be remarked that certain cottons which sold in Oklahoma at five cents were railroaded to New York and rushed into Germany before cotton was declared contraband, bringing as much as forty cents a pound. It would to-day command the same fancy figures that ice-cream cones fetch in the inferno, and a few bales, perhaps, have been filtering through Asia to German spinners. But no hysterical price can make blockade-running attractive, for British war-ships are guarding every port in the world, with insistent curiosity to see where every lock of cotton is consigned.

When the Cotton Exchange closed there was no such thing as accurate quotations. Nobody knew what cotton was worth. Panicky holders felt that it would be worth nothing, and sacrificed it for whatever they could get. Even if the seas had been safe, with all ports open, ample ships and easy money, the crop could not have moved. There was no future market—no funny little chalk-marks, with lunatics yelling and holding up fingers at each other.

The average man regards the buying and selling of futures as purely gambling transactions—tricky as drawing to bobtail flushes or picking winners from race-track dope-sheets. He fails to differentiate between the legitimate and the speculative, or to trace their connection with sound commercial principles. Yet it is through the future market that conservative business men are able to contract in advance for actual products of field and loom, instead of gambling with the chances of violent and unforeseen fluctuations.

Neither can Wash Johnson understand why the closing of future markets should prevent him from selling his crop, or hinder the clerk at Colonel Swampwood's commissary from issuing Wash's regular rations—

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on credit. For if Wash has no sale for his crop he has no credit for rations. Bear in mind that Wash raises the only crop which the producer never consumes. Wheat, corn, hay, chickens, hogs—all of these things are partly consumed on the farms; but Wash can't eat cotton, and he can't wear it until somebody else runs it through a mill. Hence Wash has to sell. And let us see how the future market affects the sale—beginning with Wash:

Wash wants to buy some calico from a country store. Other negroes likewise crave calico—the streakety-stripety criss-cross and flowery kind. The country storekeeper foresees a demand, and asks quotations from his jobber at Vicksburg. Other country storekeepers do the same, and the Vicksburg jobber must put himself in a position to make prices for October delivery. So the jobber writes a wholesaler in New York.

This wholesaler goes to a mill treasurer in Fall River, Massachusetts, and says: "My customers are inquiring for certain calicoes. At what price can you furnish them?"

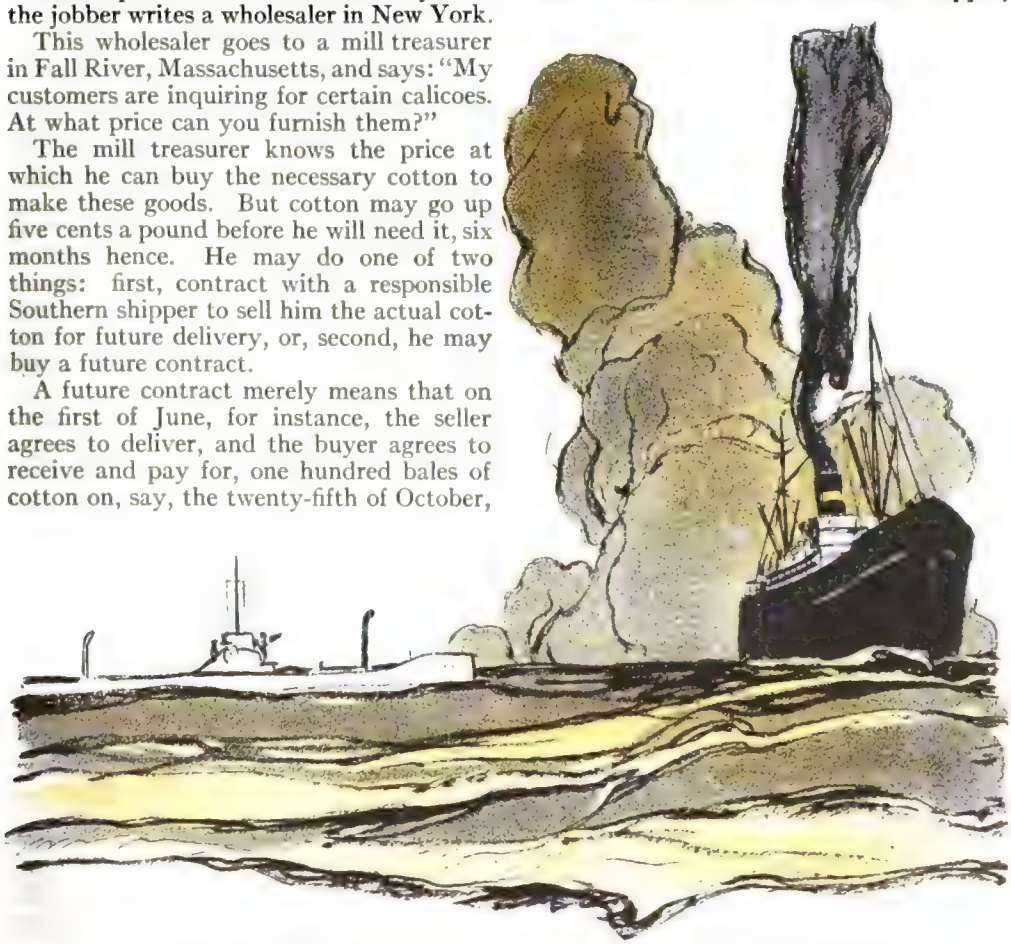
The mill treasurer knows the price at which he can buy the necessary cotton to make these goods. But cotton may go up five cents a pound before he will need it, six months hence. He may do one of two things: first, contract with a responsible Southern shipper to sell him the actual cotton for future delivery, or, second, he may buy a future contract.

A future contract merely means that on the first of June, for instance, the seller agrees to deliver, and the buyer agrees to receive and pay for, one hundred bales of cotton on, say, the twenty-fifth of October, at a certain fixed price. This cotton shall be of such grade as may be designated by law and the rules of the Exchange in which the trade is made. To bind the bargain both seller and buyer post a forfeit, called the margin.

When October twenty-fifth rolls around the actual cotton may be delivered and paid for under the contract, which ends a very simple transaction, or, if cotton has advanced one cent a pound, and delivery is not made, the seller may pay the buyer, through regular channels, the difference in price. Again a simple transaction.

So that the mill treasurer of whom we are speaking may buy in advance the cotton he needs from the Southern shipper, or may purchase a contract on the future board.

But it requires several days to consummate a deal with the Southern shipper,



THE UNDER SEA PERIL WAS AN UNKNOWN QUANTITY. GERMAN RAIDERS WERE PROWLING THE SEAS.

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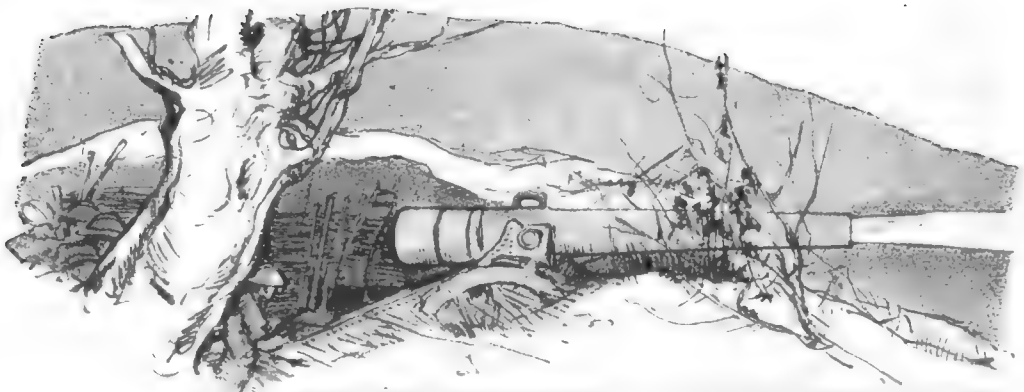

A SINGLE DISCHARGE BURNS ABOUT SIX HUNDRED POUNDS OF COTTON.

whereas a contract on the future board may be made in ten minutes—and the wholesaler is waiting. Therefore we will suppose that the treasurer elects to buy a future contract. He turns to the ticker in his office and sees that August futures—the month in which he needs the cotton—are quoted at eighteen cents. He telegraphs his broker to buy a thousand bales. Based upon eighteen-cent cotton, he knows precisely what his cloth will cost and what he can sell it for, at a profit.

Thereupon he contracts with the wholesaler for so many bolts of calico to be delivered in October at a fixed price. The wholesaler in turn is able to quote the Vicksburg jobber, who can make a price to the country store from which Wash Johnson buys a new dress for his kinky-headed wife.

But suppose instead of buying a future contract the mill treasurer buys the actual cotton. He wires Mr. J. J. Cowan, his correspondent at Vicksburg, Mississippi, asking an offer on a thousand bales, of given grade and staple, to be delivered in August. This has been a season of unparalleled fluctuations. Mr. Cowan knows the price at which he can buy such cotton to-day, but has no assurance for to-morrow, and would not care to chance the loss of ten dollars a bale. However, the future market is open.

So Mr. Cowan wires the mill treasurer offering a thousand actual bales at a certain price, which is accepted. In order to hedge against fluctuations, Mr. Cowan immediately buys a thousand bales of futures, at a lesser price, the margin constituting his profit. This future contract protects him against a rise in the market until he can purchase, assemble, and ship the actual cotton. As soon as he has bought his cotton, he closes out his future.

This being done, Mr. Cowan now goes to Colonel Swampwood's plantation and buys his crop—including Wash Johnson's ten bales. By which means Wash Johnson gets money to pay for his calico.

If the future markets were closed, the mill treasurer might not care to make prices so far ahead on his goods, and take a chance; or Mr. Cowan might be unwilling to gamble on the market by selling cotton ahead. As a consequence, the demand for Wash Johnson's cotton is materially hampered, and prices suffer accordingly.

The future market, legitimately used, is a very efficient cog in the machinery for handling cotton. Therefore I say that at the beginning of the present war, even if the seas had been safe, with ample ships and easy money, there would still have been great difficulty in moving the crop, the future markets being closed. All of which is contrary to the supposition of the average man that when the Massachusetts spinner wants cotton, and the Mississippi planter needs cash for taxes, the spinner will buy from the planter. Or that, if the ocean were uninfested with raiders, the cotton would sail away gaily to the hungry mills of Great Britain.

Wash Johnson likewise deals occasionally in futures, although he can't rightly get the hang of it. For instance:

When the bottom fell out of his grub-basket, Wash had to hustle. He went to Mr. Henry McGee in town. Mr. McGee conducts a brickyard and burns a lot of fuel.

"Mr. Henry, I'm cleanin' up a piece o' new ground, an' aims to sell some wood—oak an' ash."

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"What's it worth?"

"Four dollars a cord."

"Bully. When can you deliver twenty cords?"

"Lemme see, Mr. Henry; I figgers on haulin' dat much by de fust o' December, ef de road keeps good."

This was October first, and constituted a sale of futures—December futures in cordwood.

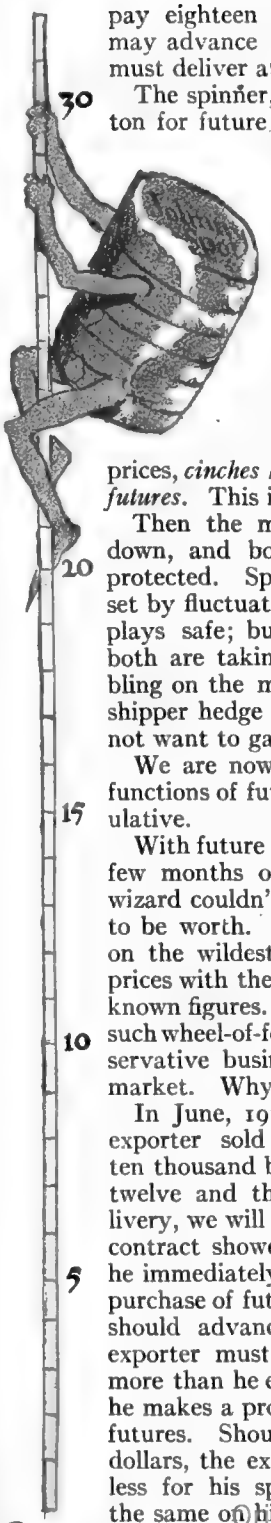
"Mr. Henry, please suh, lemme have ten dollars? Times is mighty hard fer niggers?"

"And white folks, too."

Mr. Henry McGee puts up the ten, which might be termed a margin or guarantee that he will buy Wash Johnson's wood at eighty dollars. A margin is not exacted of Wash. McGee deals with Wash on the basis of hope without faith, a hope that Wash will cut, haul, and deliver. But for purposes of illustration let us violently assume that Wash also puts up a margin of ten dollars in the hands of some perfectly innocent bystander, to bind the bargain and provide against fluctuations.

Now suppose again that on December first the price of wood has advanced. Twenty cords are now worth ninety dollars, and Wash lies down flat on his contract. Mr. Henry McGee takes Wash Johnson's ten-dollar margin, adds it to the eighty he had contracted to pay, and gets his wood at the price originally agreed upon.

This is a transaction on all-fours with that of the Fall River mill treasurer. He knows how much cotton will be required to fill his order for calico, and contracts with Mr. Cowan, the Southern shipper, for a thousand bales to be delivered in two-hundred-and-fifty-bale lots, on the first of November, December, January, and February. Treasurers and shippers are familiar with prices in the South for spot cotton—"spot" cotton signifying the actual commodity, like Johnny-on-the-spot. They agree upon a price, say eighteen cents, which leaves the shipper a profit on his trade *if the value of cotton remains unchanged*. But the value will not remain unchanged. Johnny-on-the-spot may decline to fifteen cents, and yet the mill must pay eighteen as agreed. Or the price may advance to twenty, yet Mr. Cowan must deliver at eighteen.



The spinner, having bought actual cotton for future delivery, at a price which will produce a profit on his manufactured calico, *insures that profit by selling a future contract* not for *raw* cotton, but for cotton in the manufactured shape of calico. Sometimes his entire output is sold ahead—another deal in futures. The Southern shipper, having sold ahead at a profit based upon present prices, *cinches his profit with a purchase of futures*. This is called "hedging."

Then the market may seesaw up or down, and both men are theoretically protected. Spot fluctuations will be offset by fluctuations in futures. Each man plays safe; but by neglecting to hedge, both are taking chances; they are gambling on the market. Both spinner and shipper hedge in futures because they do not want to gamble.

We are now discussing the legitimate functions of futures—not the purely speculative.

With future markets closed for the first few months of the war, the uncanniest wizard couldn't guess what cotton ought to be worth. A little trading was done on the wildest hazard, buying at blind prices with the hope of selling again at unknown figures. Banks declined to finance such wheel-of-fortune speculation, and conservative business men kept out of the market. Why? Here's one reason:

In June, 1914, a certain New Orleans exporter sold to a spinner in Europe ten thousand bales at an average price of twelve and three-quarter cents for delivery, we will say, in December. As the contract showed a profit to the exporter, he immediately insured that profit with a purchase of futures. Then if the market should advance five dollars a bale, the exporter must pay fifty thousand dollars more than he expected for his spots, while he makes a profit of fifty thousand on his futures. Should the market decline five dollars, the exporter pays fifty thousand less for his spots, but loses practically the same on his futures.

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Either way the seesaw goes, he breaks even, but *always retains his original profit.*

In September, while the exchanges were closed, this exporter bought ten thousand bales of actual cotton at six cents, and had apparently made a profit of three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred dollars; but his future contracts were outstanding and *he could not get rid of them.* Under normal conditions he would have rung out his futures the moment he filled his order with actual cotton. But he was forced to gamble whether he wanted to or not, and each decline of one cent per pound was costing him fifty thousand dollars.

He already faced a loss of three hundred thousand, and couldn't guess how much more. If he could pay the loss on his futures and collect the profit on his spots, that would put him thirty-seven thousand five hundred dollars to the good. But he could not turn loose his future contracts because the exchanges were closed.

OTHER exporters in the same predicament were anxious to cover with spots at prevailing low prices, provided they could liquidate their future contracts. Not being able to do this kept them out of the market, kept down competition, and forced values to still lower levels. And, bear in mind, the money paid for cotton is cash, which goes to the farmer.

By this time—November 16, 1914—the new crop was being ginned and shipped to town. As a bale now represented $37 instead of $67, every planter had to convert nearly twice as much of it into cash to meet his pressing obligations. The market, with ordinary trade outlets, closed under the weight dumped upon it. Prices dropped and kept dropping.

I hold no brief for the future contract; its virtues and vices have been vigorously debated from the bootblack-stand to the halls of congress. I am merely showing its effect upon the moving of Wash Johnson's crop.

When the exchange reopened, planters, bankers, shippers, spinners, and speculators began to hitch up their galluses and squint around to see where they stood. Middling was selling at seven cents. For a generation, spinners had never bought so cheap. The average price for many years had been about twelve and three-quarter cents. At seven cents the spinners could make quick profits on manufactured goods, so they rushed into the market and bought. Speculators believed that cotton was too low and played their hunches on the future board. This added a tremendous buying power under which prices steadied and even stiffened.

First exporters to England felt an uneasiness lest cargoes should not reach their destination. German raiders were prowling the seas. On November first, the Germans won a naval victory off the coast of Chile, which disturbed the market. The *Emden* was destroyed on November sixth, which tended to quiet the market. On December eighth, the German fleet was sunk off the Falkland Islands, and the seas became safer. Wash Johnson had never heard of a submarine, yet the exporter who sends Wash's cotton to a Lancashire mill must figure on the submarine as a factor in war-insurance risks. The under-sea peril was an unknown quantity. Nobody knew how far the Germans might be able to carry out their blockade of British ports, announced on the eighteenth day of February, 1915. And it was not until March fifteenth that the *Dresden* met her fate in the Pacific Ocean. All of these elements had contributed to render the cotton trade precarious.

At this crisis an entirely new element entered the market—the Federal Reserve Bank. This has cut, and will continue to cut, a very considerable figure. Heretofore when Wash Johnson turned over his ten bales of cotton to Colonel Swampwood, the colonel had to sell them along with his own. The colonel needed flocks of money—which gives local color to the following story:

Charlie Rutherford bartered his soul to the devil for cash to finance certain sporting proclivities—so nominated in the bond, signed, sealed, and delivered. Thereupon Charlie acquired unto himself a string of race-horses, backed nervous plungers off the tracks, and the devil paid his bills without a murmur. Charlie tackled Monte Carlo in a whirlwind of bad luck, tried optimistically to bust the bank—and didn't. The devil never whimpered as he honored the drafts. Charlie went in for polo, private golf-links, country estates, and Mediterranean cruises on his super-royal yacht. The devil merely smiled and rubbed his hands.

Then Charlie took a shine at Cairo—Egypt, not Illinois—outrivaled Effendi Bigharem Bey, and made the Bey's family

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circle look like a deuce-spot. All of this was cheap, and the devil had no kick.

After a breathing-spell Charlie's drafts were presented so thick and fast, in figures of such altitudinous finance, that the devil bobbed up to see what his protégé was doing. Charlie had become a planter and a colonel, with twenty thousand acres of delta land, going in for big things according to his own notions. The devil glanced over Charlie's constructive plans and got bluffed. "See here, Charlie, we'll have to call this deal off. Don't you know there ain't money enough in hell to run a swamp plantation?"

Colonel Swampwood had to have money to pay interest on his mortgage, pay his taxes, pay the factor for advances, and pay the merchant for rations that Wash Johnson had consumed. Thousands of other planters were in precisely the same fix, which rushed millions of bales into market at the same time, representing hundreds of millions of money, all to be financed and absorbed at once. No matter what the price might be, Colonel Swampwood had to sell.

Glance a moment at financial methods of handling cotton.

When the year begins, the average planter has no cash. He needs mules, plow gear, new wagons, stock for his store, repairs for his cabins—a multitude of things. The planter must furnish supplies to his tenants in order to enable them to make a crop. Formerly these "supplies" included everything the negroes ate or wore or used—every human necessity furnished on credit. But since the boll-weevil came, the tenants have raised more and more of their own foodstuffs and forage, so as to be less dependent. This is not as bad as it once was, although bad enough right now.

There are too many things which Colonel Swampwood must buy from the merchant on credit, unless he borrows from the bank and pays cash.

In early autumn, before the crop begins to move, Southern banks have loaned practically all of their available funds and need money. To carry its burden, the local bank becomes a heavy borrower, and perhaps the New York creditor is clamoring for repayment. So, irrespective of the state of the market, the local bank urges Colonel Swampwood to pick, gin, and ship his cotton. The bank which finances Colonel Swampwood must also finance the shipper who buys his crop and sells to the Eastern

NEGROES WORE ARISTOCRATIC BANDAGES, AND SWAPPED HARROWING DETAILS OF ACCIDENTS.

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mills. Cotton represents large sums; few, if any, shippers have sufficient funds to conduct their business. Loans to the shipper are usually for short periods while the cotton is being classed out, marked, and loaded on the freight-car.

These loans were formerly in the shape of overdrafts—before that practise was prohibited—overdrafts secured by a deposit of the cotton-warehouse receipts; or credits for definite sums were arranged in advance with the banks and upon the same collateral. In either event, when the banker paid out money for the shipper he was supposed to hold a warehouse receipt for sufficient cotton to cover.

Under these commercial conditions, when the shipper gives Colonel Swampwood his check he must deposit receipts for the colonel's cotton. And the bank is not supposed to turn loose these receipts until the shipper resells the cotton, loads it on railroad cars, and draws his draft against the mill treasurer—with bill of lading attached. Therefore when the shipper delivers his cotton to the railroad he gets a bill of lading, and the bank surrenders its warehouse receipts, substituting the bill of lading and the shipper's draft, as security.

This draft is credited in New York to the account of the Southern bank.

These shackles have been pretty well struck off by the Federal Reserve. For instance: The Dexter Company National Bank has precisely one hundred thousand dollars which can be used for the handling of its customers' cotton. This will finance two thousand bales. But the Dexter Bank can take cotton receipts as collateral to the Federal Reserve, and get actual currency at two and three-quarters to three per cent. This money may then be reloaned on cotton at a rate not exceeding six per cent., and with the additional collateral the Dexter Bank can get more currency. By this process the Dexter Bank, with only a hundred thousand dollars, can lend indefinitely—according to the discretion of the Federal Reserve and the strength of the Dexter Bank. Better than this, actual currency is issued against the cotton which goes to pay Wash Johnson, and Wash promptly disseminates it into circulation for sardines, automobiles, and such like. Panics have come about, not from lack of *credit*, but from lack of *cash*.

The practical effect is that the farmer producing cotton, corn, wheat, oats, or other agricultural commodities may not sit tight in the boat and not be forced to sell his produce unless he wants to—a novel situation for the average farmer. Cotton may now be marketed, not in overwhelming total waves, but as the needs of the world consume it.

The Federal Reserve Bank began operation in November, 1914, and had a wonderful effect in steadying agricultural prices.

At the beginning of the war we owed Great Britain one hundred and fifty millions of interest on American obligations, and the prudent Briton feared that we could not pay. Northern merchants withdrew their advertisements from Southern newspapers, considering the South as a busted community, unable to buy their goods and to pay for them.

Rates of exchange between this country and Great Britain advanced to 6.12 from a normal rate of 4.86 to the pound sterling, because large sums were then being transferred to liquidate our British debt. But the shoe immediately shifted to the other foot when we began shipping cotton and grain. Vast sums rolled westward over the Atlantic. The rate of exchange dropped to 4.50, even before the export of munitions began. Now, instead of our being indebted to Great Britain, she is indebted to us, paying for our cotton, grain, and other commodities with the proceeds of loans raised in this country.

When Johnny Spot Began Climbing

WHEN the exchanges reopened in November, 1914, spot cotton was selling around seven cents. From that point Johnny Spot began to climb steadily, with few if any slip-backs. Speculators were not shoving him up, he was boosting himself. Johnny had climbed beyond the reach of bulls. There was no such thing as a well-recognized and dominant bull clique, as in previous advancing years. Speculators followed the market in a tentative and timid way instead of boldly leading it. Rumors leaked out of big munitions contracts, orders for clothing, tentage materials, and the like. Quotations climbed steadily. So strong was this feeling that prices continued to advance in spite of a seventeen-million-bale crop—the largest ever grown—when only fourteen and a half had been expected.

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The farmer did not reap all the profit from this rise of 1915. Much, if not the greater portion, of his cotton had been sold. With the restoration of confidence, money became plentiful, and could be borrowed in New York as low as two and three-eighths per cent. on warehouse receipts with futures sold against them—which insured the price.

During July, 1914, before the crash of war, the average price of a bale of cotton was $67. During August it fell to $49; in September to $44, reaching the lowest level of $37.49 in October, a sheer loss of forty-five per cent. The American crop of 1914-1915, although a quarter of a million bales greater than the previous year's, sold for three hundred and eighty-four millions less.

From November, 1914, prices began to climb, slowly and gradually, January 1, 1915, showing a value of $41. In April it rose to $49, a gain of six dollars over the previous month. Dropping in May, June, and July, it recovered somewhat in August, and touched $63 in October; but it was not for two full years after the outbreak of this European war that cotton, in July, 1916, reasserted its intrinsic value at the point from which it had been forced, $67 per bale.

Then another rise began, for a most substantial reason.

Prior to July 31, 1916, few observers looked for a consumption of more than thirteen and a half million bales. On that date Mr. Henry G. Hester, Secretary of the New Orleans Cotton Exchange, and perhaps the world's foremost authority on cotton, issued his statement showing a fourteen-and-three-quarter-million-bale consumption of American cotton. This made every spinner sit up and take another think. Johnny Spot hadn't yet reached the top of his pole. More rapidly than before, he started on a brand-new spectacular climb, which by October 25, 1916, had added another $28.10 to the value of each five-hundred-pound bale.

Occasionally, when something extraordinary happened at the seat of war, Johnny's foot would slip a little and he would slide back, but in the main he kept on climbing. For instance, the sinking of the *Lusitania* caused a drop; a threatened break of relations with Germany caused another; the destruction of the German raiding fleet near the Falkland Islands made Johnny climb a little faster, on the theory that the seas would be safe for him to travel.

The present steady rise has been different from all other speculative advances, because it came at a time when the increased price of cotton went directly to Colonel Swampwood and to George Washington Johnson. In other speculative years—except one—the prices were depressed while the crop was still in the farmers' hands, the advance coming when the men who raised the cotton could reap no benefit from it.

The Part Cotton Plays in Warfare

WAR can not wait, and urgent demand for the staple has caused this rise. Nobody had any idea how much cotton went into war material: gunpowder, tentage, absorbent cotton, bandages, automobile tires, the destruction of which has been terrific. It is said, for instance, that a single discharge of a big cannon on board the *Queen Elizabeth* burns about six hundred pounds of cotton. Automobiles may now consume a million bales a year of the very finest cotton that can be produced.

This new source of consumption has grown up within the last ten years.

One of the great American manufacturers of explosives recently said that his operations had used nearly a million bales. That was months ago, and by this time his consumption must be far greater.

This season's crop may net the farmer from six to seven hundred millions more than the crop of 1914-1915. Production is undeniably short, except in a few favored localities unravaged by the boll-weevil, which has possibly destroyed two million bales. Somebody has lauded the boll-weevil as a Southern asset. That is true, absolutely true. The busy Mrs. Weevil, with her egg-laying propensities, is a most valuable asset to the planter who *hasn't* got her on his place. And those plantations which she has left alone are now reaping rich returns.

If it be true that the present crop will reach approximately twelve and a half millions, and further true that the world's consumption may run to twenty millions, there may be no cotton left over at the end of the season. If so, it would take the seventh son of a seventh son to predict the price. But many well-informed men consider this an unthinkable situation. When prices go above a certain point they automatically check consumption, and substitutes are

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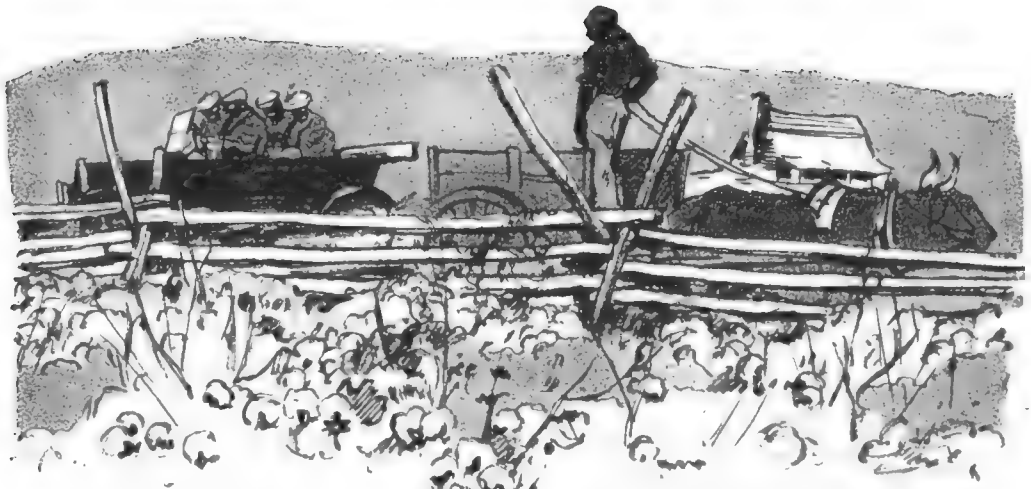

ALL ROADS BUZZED WITH "TIN LIZZIES" AND GRINNING NEGROES.

found for a too extravagant commodity.

But suppose the war should end, and the extraordinary demand for cotton in munitions be shut off? Suppose, on the other hand, that cotton-starved Germany and Austria should enter the market for millions of bales to supply their waste and destruction? Where would prices go? Some experts figure one way, and some figure another.

I don't know. If I knew I'd never have to do any more figuring.

It is stated—not by spinners, however—that at the present prices of manufactured goods, the mills can possibly pay twenty cents per pound for cotton and yet make more money than they were making at the lowest prices for raw material. Southern mills especially have had a wonderfully prosperous year.

Germany and Austria have been excellent customers for American cotton, a market now entirely shut off because of certain inconveniences. Russia has taken annually a million or so of our bales through the port of Bremen; but a prevailing German peevishness against the Russ would prevent this cotton from getting through, even if the guileful British war-ship ever permitted it to land at Bremen.

A wonderful growth of consumption by American spinners has largely absorbed this surplus which can not now be exported. For instance, in 1865-1866 American mills consumed about two-thirds of a million bales. Fifty years later we are consuming seven million. Twenty-six years ago Southern mills consumed a little upward of half a million. To-day Southern spindles and Southern labor are spinning more than four million bales of the fleecy product of our lands. The United States as a whole is now consuming forty-eight per cent. of the American crop, besides importing some of the very best from Egypt.

If the American yield had not increased phenomenally meanwhile, we should to-day have no cotton at all to sell. As a matter of fact, our home consumption in the year 1915 equaled the entire American crop for any year up to 1890-1891. So that, unless we had produced more and more cotton, we might to-day be snapping our fingers in the face of the world and saying, "You need not buy a single bale. We will sell manufactured goods instead."

ONCE more—November, 1916—Colonel Swampwood sat upon his front gallery, and once more the colonel was feeling good, although the big house seemed mighty empty with both his daughters in New York. The colonel chuckled to himself over a newspaper paragraph about a negro at a garage having his automobile repaired. Two years ago the same negro could not have financed repairs on the seat of his pants.

"Boss," the negro inquired, "how long befo' you kin fix dat car?"

"Not until Monday morning."

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"Boss, I'm 'bleeged to have my car on Sunday; I loves to ride an' ride on Sundays."

"Sorry, but it won't be ready until Monday."

The negro glanced around, then pointed to another little "road-louse" in the corner. "Boss, whose car is dat?"

"Mine."

"You don't aim to sell it?"

"Yes, I would sell, if I got my price."

"What's it wuff?"

"A thousand dollars."

"All right, suh; I'll jes' buy dis'n whilst I'm a-waitin'."

And he paid cash.

The same bale of cotton which two years ago had sold for $37 was now bringing $95. Some of the colonel's high-grade long staples brought $180. The cotton crop of this year would more than liquidate the interest-bearing public debt of the United States. Negroes had more money than they knew what to do with — which troubled the colonel. Exultant prosperity takes them away from plantations until their cash is spent in the cities, and the colonel could not afford to lose his tenants.

That's why he was chuckling over the automobile story.

Wash Johnson had acquired himself an auto, with the colonel's crafty encouragement. Eighty-six other tenants had gone and done likewise, so Wash couldn't get ahead of them in purchasing, or make them swallow his dust when he went to town. All roads buzzed with "Tin Lizzies" and grinning negroes, busier than bumblebees in a bucket of tar. The blacksmith-shop was piled with shattered cars. Negroes wore aristocratic bandages, and swapped harrowing details of accidents; while gasoline, surgeon's bills, and repairs consumed their cash.

If eighty-seven ring-tailed baboons would have amused his tenants and kept them at home, Colonel Swampwood would cheerfully have imported the necessary menagerie. While he was considering this humorous but practical situation, Wash Johnson, covered with smeary dust, and with a bloody gash across his forehead, hustled through the front gate.

"What's the matter, Wash?"

"Dat fool nigger Elder Spriggs wouldn't gimme no road, so I jes' knocked him out of it."

"Hurt anybody?"

"Not so overly much, suh. Dey toted him home. Cunnel, what's de mos' 'stravagant autymobile I kin buy?"

"Did you break yours?"

"Shucks, cunnel! 'Twon't neither one o' dem cars do fer kindlin'-wood. Blacksmith say he can't never ontangle 'em. I wants a 'stravagant car."

"Why?"

" 'Cause my wife's got a lot o' kinfolks in de hills. Dey heered I made some money an' come to stay wid us. I aims to spen' my money an' git shut o' dem lazy niggers."

TO MY MOTHER

BY LOUIS UNTERMEYER

POOR recompense to you were I to fill
This page with rhyme and rhetoric, to display
Only the poet and thereby betray
My earliest thoughts for mere poetic skill.
Poor recompense, indeed, were I to thrill
With my own music, turn to you and say
"I give you these, my verses; let them pay
For all you gave and all you give me still."

I am too poor to buy you back the years
A mother pays for with her dreams and fears,
For I am rich in nothing but in love.
So let me live my thanks, so let me be
Forever in your debt, who gave to me
The breath of life—and all the joy thereof.

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ONE WEEK OF KELLY

By Wilbur S. Boyer

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAGINEL WRIGHT ENRIGHT

UP FROM Johnnie Kelly's desk, directly in front of the teacher, a house-fly shot with an angry buzz. Mr. Parks, thirty years of age and with ten years of experience in the city schools, was bent over his roll-book making crosses; and as he had neglected, veteran-like, to take the attendance for a week, he was too engrossed to note the instant galvanization of every boy and girl in the 7B class.

Dangling below the fly on a thread was a paper man as big as a "suffragette" button. From yellow-haired Max Schuler, aged eleven, to shaven-headed Victor Caluchie, sixteen, all eyes were on that fly—all except those of Johnnie Kelly. He was studying the circular metal top of his ink-well for its artistic possibilities.

Books lay open on the desks, "Evangeline" forgotten. She could have chased Gabriel to Przemysl, for all 7B cared. Forty heads moved in unison as that fly went two laps around the room, dragged the tiny man over a chandelier, circumnavigated the globe on top of the book-closet, and settled upon the

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dusty bust of Abraham Lincoln. He explored the martyr-president's face, the paper figure, with outstretched arms and legs, scraping off the thick dust until Lincoln resembled a coal-heaver at the close of a hot July day.

A smothered chorus of snickers evidenced that the effect was appreciated; but Mr. Parks still crossed on.

Up Master Fly soared again toward the front of the room and circled over the unwitting pedagogue's head, while the class watched with bated breath and happy faces. In a graceful curve, that fly settled upon the teacher's inkstand, and the man at the end of the thread, leaning wearily against the inkwell, appealed to Mr. Parks. The teacher jumped in his seat and stared at the figure. There was no doubting whom it was meant to represent, even had it not carried a tennis-racket in one hand and in the other a satchel marked: "D.P.—P.S. 199, MAN"—for the teacher's characteristics were well accentuated: stocky build, broad shoulders, square jaw, and curly black hair.

Teacher made a pass at it, and the class giggled. The fly darted up, wheeled about, and landed on the map of North America behind Mr. Parks's desk. From Newfoundland to Salt Lake City he traveled, D.P. twirling along on a parallel several degrees nearer the tropics. Stealthily Mr. Parks rose, roll-book in hand, murder in his eye. As Master Fly, traveling south, crossed the Grand Cañon, came one swift swat of the roll-book—and there was a new city in Arizona.

A titter rippled over the class. The instructor spun around, and forty noses were

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buried somewhere between Acadie and Delaware's waters. He turned again to the map. The aviator was over the line in Mexico, yet without extradition papers he was seized and incarcerated in an envelop.

Coldly the schoolmaster surveyed his pupils. There is a limit to the patience of even the most sympathetic teacher. "Now, where is the baby that must be amused?" he asked.

Up came forty innocent, wide-eyed countenances.

"Caluchie, you seem to be——"

"Nun-no-no, sir," stammered the scared Italian, "I don't do it."

"Do you know who did?"

"I—I don't know nothin'," Victor quavered; but even as he spoke he looked directly across the aisle at his red-headed neighbor, and Mr. Daniel Parks's glare followed.

Johnnie Kelly was busy. The hole near the circumference of the ink-well top suggested an open mouth; so, having chewed the end of a match-stick into a brush, Johnnie had inked in a pair of crossed eyes and a snub nose, and was at this particular instant painting a number of eighth and quarter notes apparently shooting from the black throat.

"Johnnie Kelly, stand!" came the command.

Hastily dropping the inky match on the floor, the tallest boy in the class gathered his spindling legs in from the aisle and rose, his mouth open in simulated surprise; but he could no more conceal his guilt than he could hide his freckles or his pert pug nose, for the whole class looked at him and giggled.

FROM auburn head to tan shoes Mr. Parks eyed him, critically. The boy had not been in the school five full days, and he was not sure what that survey meant. He shifted his weight from one ungainly cub foot to the other and back again; he looked down and found that his hands certainly dangled far from the ends of his coat sleeves, so he shoved them into his pockets; that not seeming polite, he withdrew them and clasped them behind his back.

Why that look in the big teacher's face? Johnnie knew his own coat was as good as that of Van Zarn, the boy in the seat behind him; but under Mr. Parks's searching gaze he had to confess to himself that it was rather wrinkly. The red sweater, appropriate in the crowded Bronx school from which he had come, was out of place in this "kid-glove" classroom. His tan shoes, only two weeks old, had not been polished since they came out of the store.

As he stood there fidgeting and the man slowly looked him up and down once more and uttered no word, it was borne in upon the boy that while his face, his hands, his body, were as clean as soap and water could make them, his general appearance was in marked contrast with that of his classmates. It was a humiliating discovery.

"Well?" Mr. Parks towered above him expectantly, and again the class bubbled over. Johnnie wished the man would show temper—it would seem natural. Instead, that half-pitying smile cut the boy to the heart. He tried looking at Arizona's new metropolis, but that struck him as most improper, and he finally glued his eyes on the shaven head of Victor Caluchie.

"Well?" repeated Mr. Parks.

"I ain't lookin' for trouble," protested the culprit meekly.

"Young man," said the teacher, "in the one week you have been in this school you have got into more mischief than all the other boys put together. You seem to be out of your element."

The last remark hurt, and Johnnie was too confused to reply; while Mr. Parks studied the caricature again.

"This is the limit," the man declared. "I'll write a letter asking your father to call."

To beg off might have been Johnnie's procedure, if the boys and girls had not exhibited such derisive joy. What stung him most deeply was the chuckle of Van Zarn, the boy in the seat behind—the well-dressed, popular Van Zarn, wearing a conspicuous black eye presented him by Master Kelly only the day previous. Johnnie's head drooped. It was a lucky droop, for his eye lit upon a small pocket fastened by thumb-tacks to the back of the teacher's desk. In this pocket was a note-book labeled, "SENT TO THE NURSE."

Kelly was inspired. "M-m—my father's sick," he mumbled.

The instructor hesitated. "I'm sorry to hear that." And he glanced up at the boy. That Celtic face was never meant to conceal the truth. "What ails him, Johnnie?" he asked.

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Measles and scarlet fever and mumps raced through the boy's mind, but he let them pass. He had a strong conviction that grown-ups never had those ailments. Longingly he eyed the nurse-book as he answered: "I—I can't think o' the name jest now. It's a hard one; bub—but I'll find out for you."

"Humph!" grunted Daniel Parks. "Stay at noon and I'll give you a note for him anyway. He'll have something to think about."

Johnnie subsided limply into his seat, and though Mr. Parks proceeded to teach, not one word of his instruction sank into Johnnie's mind. A fly alighted on the boy's ink-well and scratched himself with one mizzen leg—a lazy-looking fly, doubtless easy to catch; but a wise fly, as he carefully avoided the wet quarter notes. With his feet full of ink, that fly would have possessed great potentiality; but Johnnie, heeding him not, sat bolt upright, the spirit of mischief dead in his eyes.

Visions of a burly father in blue and brass buttons, off duty at the twelve o'clock shift, passed before him; but it was not the prospect of a thrashing that was weighing on Johnnie's mind. His father always tended to that job with fervor, yet always in the right place, and the sting would pass away. Not so easily would vanish the sting of that lie.

Johnnie knew that to many boys a falsehood to the teacher was something to chuckle over and brag about. In fact, in the other school Johnnie had felt much that way. He had never reveled in the pastime, but had condoned it in others as a justifiable defense against the enemy.

Here was a teacher, however, who remembered his own boyhood. True, to-day, Johnnie had, in the vernacular, got that teacher's goat; but in the short while Johnnie had been in this school he had found Mr. Parks "on the level." And now, in a sudden panic, to escape a walloping—or was it because of Van Zarn's derisive joy?—he had lied to a man like that!

What should he do now? Confess? Being just an overgrown boy with a sensitive nature in spite of his rough exterior, he did not dare. He had thrashed Van Zarn, the acknowledged leader, but he could not face the titter of little Max Schuler or the tiniest girl with the molasses-taffy curls. He concluded to wriggle out of this dilemma, consoling himself with the most solemn oaths that never again would he lie, though it were to save him from death itself.

The nurse-book on the back of the desk looked very inviting. Term after term, from the day when his father had dragged him, unwilling, into kindergarten, he had seen classmates with runny noses, red eyes, blotchy faces, or doggy barks march out of the room with just such a nurse-book in hand, to receive vacations of various lengths. That book must be loaded with diseases; and there was the valuable information he needed within two feet, waiting to serve his purpose.

It was ten minutes later that he got up enough courage to slip the precious booklet from its place while Mr. Parks was trying to pump from a dull-eyed maid twenty per cent. of sixty gallons of gasoline. Surreptitiously Johnnie studied: "Sore throat—O.K.—return to class." "Measles—sent home." He passed over tonsilitis and chicken-pox, as not serious enough, and was about to decide upon eczema as sounding rather fatal, when his eye lit upon a longer one. After the entry, "Victor Caluchie," was an ailment he had never heard of before. It looked most formidable and was followed by the comment, "Bad case—sent home for treatment—not to return until cured." With a sigh of relief the boy copied the name of the dreadful disease and slipped the book back into place.

WHEN the noon gong sounded and the class marched out past him, Johnnie tried to appear unconscious of their derision. He even grinned back at Van Zarn as if he really believed that young man's smile was meant for admiration. But down in his heart he knew it meant: "Kelly, you're a queer bird—"; and Johnnie was relieved when the door closed behind the boy with the black eye.

"Now, see here, Kelly," began Mr. Parks, taking the boy's conduct card from a stack in the desk, "this has been a strenuous start in a new school. Every one of the departmental teachers has complained. Here is one week of Kelly:

" 'Admitted Monday at nine o'clock. In the science room, lifted Caluchie's paper with fingers purposely inked——' "

Johnnie choked his laugh, but a smothered sound escaped.

"I don't see anything to laugh at," said Mr. Parks.

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"That's because you didn't see old Sal—I mean Miss Primton's face," whispered Johnnie confidentially. "Looked as if she smelt burnt rubber."

Under the desk dived Mr. Parks, probably to pick up something, and bobbed up again, face red but painfully set as he continued the reading of the card:

" 'At the end of the third period carried off Van Zarn's books and left them on the windowsill in the hall.' "

"Who's that girl alongside o' him?" interposed the boy.

"You mean Georgia?"

"Yeh. He was chinnin' so hard with her, I jest thought I'd take care of his books so he wouldn't lose 'em."

The schoolmaster dropped the card and eyed his pupil severely; but not a smile appeared on the boy's face, and the teacher picked up the card once more.

" 'Tried to make the science lesson more practical by putting chewing-gum on Carson's seat.' "

"Is that adhesion or cohesion, Mr. Parks?" Johnnie ventured; and he honestly had no intention of being flippant or disrespectful. But it was an unfortunate question. If by any chance his teacher had previously been inclined to be lenient, there was thereafter no doubt of his attitude.

"Young man," snapped the master, "you probably understand me when I say you are acting entirely too fresh; and to-day is your judgment day. Keep a civil tongue and listen: I told you that it does not pay to have fun by making trouble for others. I advised you to play *with* the boys, not against them. Yet yesterday you threw all the board-rubbers up into the hopper of the ventilator in-take to make trouble for me; and locked Max Schuler in the ventilator outlet down here behind my desk, and he spent two hours there."

"I was playin' *with* him, like you said," protested Johnnie apologetically. "He didn't lose nothin' but music and gym—they don't count—and spellin', and he's a fine speller."

"I told you it was time you got over being a little boy," Mr. Parks went on sternly; "time you got into some healthful sport out in the open air—something to make you looked up to by all your comrades."

"And I tried to do it, too," blurted out Johnnie. "The fellers didn't have nothin' to do with me much, so I goes up to Jack Van Zarn, because he's the huskiest, and I says, 'Say, who is leader o' the gang?'

"And he says, 'Gang! What gang?' jest like that.

"And I says, 'Your gang!'

"And he says, 'There isn't any gang in this school.'

"And I says, 'Ah, g'wan!' jest like that. 'What cher t'ink I am, a boob?'

"And he says, 'You're a funny fellow,' jest like that.

"And I says, 'Say, you t'ink a lot o' yourself, don't cher?' jest like that. 'Won't have nothin' to do with a feller that can't talk Riverside-Drivey, huh! Ain't I as good as you?'

"And he says, 'Who says you ain't?'

"And I says, 'Why don't the fellers treat me the same?'

"And he says, 'P'r'aps because you do so many fool stunts.'

"And I let him look at my knuckles, jest like that, and I says, 'I'm a fool, am I, huh?'

"And he says, 'I didn't say that.'

"And I says, 'You're another. Wait till I ketch you outside. I'm goin' to make you fellers look up to me, jest like Mr. Parks says.' And——"

"Hold on!" objected Mr. Parks. "You certainly have a peculiar way of following out my advice. I know you had a fight Wednesday afternoon."

Johnnie's tone changed. "I knocked the stuffin' out o' him," he grinned. "Ain't that eye a beaut of a shiner?"

Mr. Parks coughed suspiciously. "I told you that you'd never get any more friends by thrashing than you would by playing tricks. I said: 'Amuse, but don't injure.' "

"Jest what you said!" cried Johnnie enthusiastically. "So I thought o' that fly——"

"Goodness gracious!" ejaculated the teacher, clapping both hands to his head. "I don't know what you'll do next if I coach you. Here, take this letter home and bring me an answer at one o'clock. I give up the job."

Out in the hall Kelly, Jr. paused to survey the superscription on the sealed envelop, and made a wry face. "Gee horsefat!" he groaned. "Some joke, ha, ha!—'Kindness of Johnnie!' "

Very little time did Johnnie spend at home. He raced back before the schoolpatrol and tiptoed up to the third story.

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The floor was deserted. Into his classroom he glided, where from his pocket he drew paper and envelop. In laborious backhand he penned his father's answer:

MY DEER MR. PARKS:

I'm sory to hear how bad Johnnie been he says he is going to be better as I am bed sick sick with Pediculosis, and Oblidge

your Freind

PATRICK KELLY.

His final touch was:

Kindness of Johnnie.

in a corner of the envelop.

"And that ain't no joke, *this* time, believe ME!" was his earnest comment as he slipped the epistle into his pocket.

From another pocket he drew a banana-skin and thoroughly smeared his tan shoes, polishing them with a new board-rubber.

WHERE FROM HIS POCKET JOHNNIE DREW PAPER AND ENVELOP. IN LABORIOUS BACKHAND HE PENNED HIS FATHER'S ANSWER.

He read it over, then wrote:

P. S.—I'll lick him when I get better.

"There!" he sighed. "He oughter, anyway. If I git away with it this time, never again for yours truly, or I hope to die and sizzle!" Then he superscribed the envelop,

Mr. Daniel Parks,
Atrest.

There was an uncomfortable feeling that that was not the way his teacher spelled the word, and he wished he had not thrown the other envelop down the sewer; but, "What's the dif?" he muttered. "Pop can't expect to spell everythin' right."

"The guy that wrote how you could do it wasn't no liar," Johnnie chuckled, surveying his footgear, now more in harmony with his red hair; and he tossed the banana-skin into the hopper of the ventilator over his head. He hung his sweater in the clothing-closet, brushed his clothes with the teacher's whisk-broom, and surveyed himself in the mirror on the door of the teacher's locker.

"Gee, what a mop!" he exclaimed, running his hand through his carroty bristles. He dampened the front locks at the drinking-fountain in the hall and combed them down with a girl's side-comb taken from

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the "Lost and Found" drawer in the teacher's desk. That a dry, wiry red brush stood up like an aigrette toward the rear, either escaped his notice or did not worry him, for he tossed the comb up into the ventilator to join the banana-skin and smiled at his changed appearance in the mirror. He felt that he had made a good beginning.

Barely time was there for the strategist to bolt down a girls' staircase to the floor below and dodge through to the boys' end of the building, there to tag his own class-line as it climbed to its afternoon tasks.

Mr. Parks was still in the yard when Johnnie took his seat without the usual fooling. He waited for some one to speak to him. One boy, only, showed signs of wanting to be chummy, and he was Victor Caluchie. Johnnie was not flattered. Walking over to Van Zarn he held out his hand. "Shake, will yer?" he urged.

"Sure," responded Jack.

"I licked you fair, didn't I?"

"Sure thing," admitted Jack, tenderly feeling his eye.

"No hard feelin's?" questioned the conqueror.

"Nope."

"And I'm head o' the gang?" Johnnie spoke eagerly.

"What gang? There is no gang that I know of."

Johnnie was staggered. But, gang or no gang, there was no denying that all his efforts to win recognition had failed; and the entrance of Mr. Parks cut short the interview.

"Kelly, did you give your father my note?" The teacher was surely on the trail.

"Here's the answer," was the boy's listless reply.

Mr. Parks cut open the envelop. Johnnie saw the man's face turn red; he cleared his throat. "Johnnie," said he suavely, "I'm sorry to hear this. Is your father able to sit up?"

"Not much," replied Johnnie.

"That's too bad. Do you think I might see him if I called?"

"It's catchin'."

"That's true. I never thought of that. Does the doctor think it has got down on his lungs yet?"

"It might git there if he ain't careful. He mustn't git in a draft, or—git excited."

Dangerously quiet was the teacher's voice. "I want to see you at three o'clock, Kelly."

When the class left Mr. Parks's room on its afternoon schedule, the boy certainly felt miserable; so miserable that he could not sit still in the grammar-teacher's room, and went out into the hall, ostensibly to get a drink. Hardly had he closed the door behind him when Mr. Parks's voice came from the next doorway: "—Not more than two dollars, and put this note in the basket." Then Mr. Parks's door closed. A boy scurried down the hall, stuffing some money into his pocket.

Johnnie needed a big drink after that. "It *can't* have nothin' to do with me, of course," he mused, "but it sounds mighty phony. I'm afraid he's *on* all right—and there'll be somethin' doin' fer me, all right, all right!"

After three, once more Johnnie and his teacher sat alone in the classroom. The windows were open. The high-pitched voices of the homeward-bound youngsters in the street below added their babble to the clang and clatter of street-cars and the raucous warnings of autos; yet the ear of Master Kelly was deaf to it all. He watched teacher take out the caricature and place it on the desk; he breathed heavily when beside it was laid the letter signed "Patrick Kelly."

"Johnnie"—the voice was not steady—"I am very much disappointed. I thought there was good in you in spite of your silly tricks. I have told the other teachers that my faith in you has not been shaken, but—" he paused.

Johnnie felt his face getting hotter and hotter. This was not what he had expected. He swallowed several times. "Kin I close the door?" he asked. And when the chance of prying eyes had thus been shut out, the boy sank into a seat near the door, suddenly buried his face in his arms on the desk, and sobbed as only a big boy can sob.

He felt a hand laid gently on his shoulder. "What's the matter, boy?" The tone was certainly not antagonistic.

Johnnie lifted his head. "Aw, I'm a geek to blubber," he choked out. "I know I ain't like the other fellers, and I oughtn't to care. I talk different, I act different. They t'ink I'm a freak. I've tried ev'rythin'—teasin', bein' funny, fightin'—I've tried all you said. The more I do the more I git in Dutch. I'll do anythin' else you say, Mr.

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Parks. You're white. All I want is jest to be one o' the gang and have 'em like me. I'm lonesome, somethin' fierce, and that's the trut'—I'm lonesome!" Whereupon Johnnie broke down again.

Mr. Parks's voice was quite husky: "I knew there must be an answer; but I didn't guess that."

And then the door swung open and Johnnie sat up as in strode a red-headed policeman with a basket of fruit hanging on one arm and a bottle of wine tucked under the other.

"My name's Kelly," declared the newcomer as the schoolmaster turned to receive him, "Pat Kelly. That's my chip"—pointing to Johnnie. "This is Mr. Parks, I'm thinkin'? I come around to thank ye, but there must be some mistake." He set the basket and the wine on the desk, hung his cap on the wine-bottle, dived into his pocket and, extracting a letter, proceeded to read it aloud laboriously:

"MY DEAR MR. KELLY,

"It was wid deep regret that I heard of your seerious condition. I niver before heard of the affliction you mention bein' seevere enough to keep a man in bed. I sympat'ize wid you deeply and send you this fruit and wine wid the hope that they may make your stay indoors more pleasant.

"Yours sincerely,
"DANIEL PARKS.

"Phat's the joke?" he demanded.

"I COME AROUND TO THANK YE, BUT THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE."

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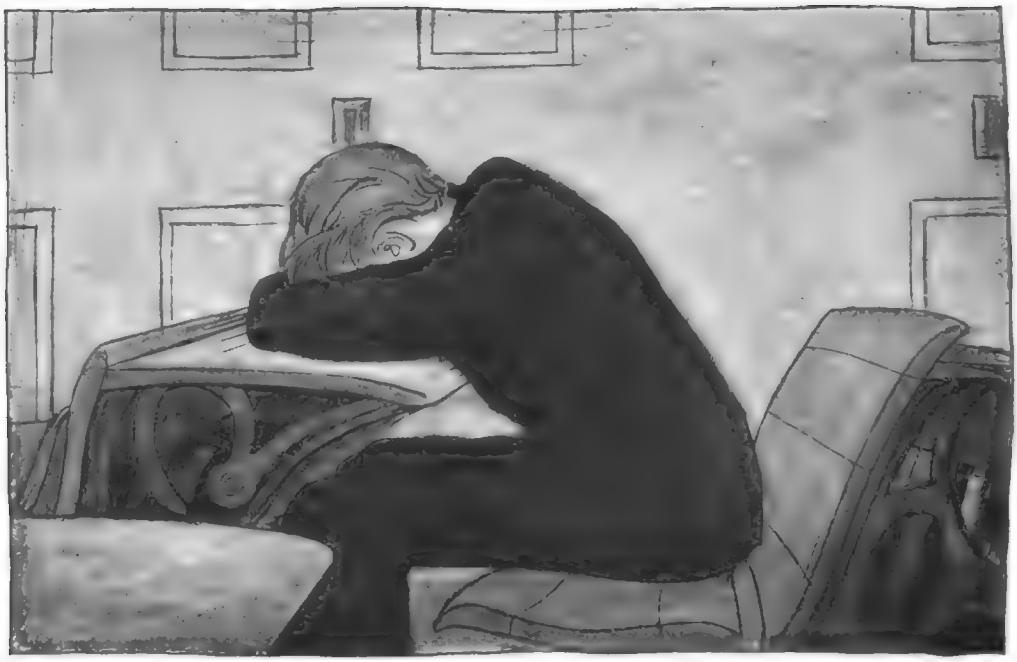


JOHNNIE SANK INTO A SEAT NEAR THE DOOR, SUDDENLY BURIED HIS FACE IN HIS ARMS ON THE DESK, AND SOBBED AS ONLY A BIG BOY CAN SOB.

"No joke, that I know of," was the teacher's answer. "I'm delighted to see you well enough to be out of bed; but I am puzzled after getting this note from you—" and over into the elder Kelly's hand went the paper Johnnie had handed in.

"Phat's that disease, pedi-*cu*-losis?" asked Kelly, Sr.

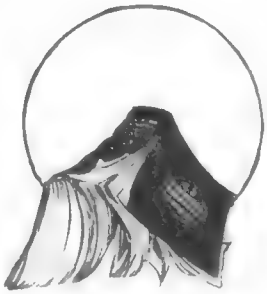
A dictionary was handed him, the definition underlined.

"Oh, my lard!" he roared. With one stride he had his son by the collar.

That spidery young gentleman was laid across the parental knee and the dictionary applied to the place of greatest altitude with such vigor that, before Mr. Parks could interfere, the book split in two and the leaves went sailing about the room. But not a whimper escaped young Kelly. In fact, at that particular moment it felt good to get a licking.

"Hold on, Mr. Kelly," pleaded the schoolmaster, "don't be *too* severe with the boy. I judge by your actions that you did not write this note?"

The father's arm paused in mid-air. "Write it? Do I look it?"



He surveyed the remnants in his hand and permitted his son to rise. "It's still got that wurrud," said he. "Johnnie, ye can write that deffynition five hun'erd times the night."

"Mr. Kelly," the teacher broke in, "I think Johnnie has learned his lesson. I thank you for your part in it. But, after all, he's only a big boy who's not over being a small boy yet. I have just had a talk with him, and my faith in him is now absolutely unshakable. Some day you will be proud of him."

Florid-faced and excited, the father stared at the teacher. "*He*—? you!—proud? —holy macaroons!" he sputtered; then grabbed his cap from the wine bottle. "I'd better git out before I skin 'im alive," he exploded. "Mr. Teacher, you've got the queerest way o' handlin' kids iver I see. I'll leave 'im to you. T'anks for the shtuff"—a wave toward the fruit and wine—"but I guess it ain't mine. When you git t'rough wid 'im, take a drink on me to stiddy yourself." Officer Kelly jammed his cap on his head and bolted.

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Mr. Parks seated himself to catch his breath.

When the heavy tramp of the policeman's arch-supporting shoes had died away on the stairs, Johnnie came up close to the desk. "That ain't really so, what you told my father last, is it?" he asked, almost in a whisper.

"Yes, it is, Johnnie."

"And you ain't kiddin'?"

"It's the honest truth, Johnnie."

"After all I've done?" He placed a hand timidly, reverently, on his teacher's arm.

"After all you've done. Boy, you see that all your efforts have failed. They can't be the right ones. Now, try being your own, natural self. If you are worth cultivating as a companion, others will soon find it out; if you are not, it is well that *you* find it out as soon as possible." He took Johnnie's card from the desk and tore it up. "There! I have faith in you. I can't prove that my faith is justified."

"I can," cried Johnnie with a vim, "and I will." Then he added sheepishly: "Say, can't we give that fruit to Victor? I seen by the nurse-book how he has been so sick with that disease, and his folks is too poor——"

The teacher controlled himself sufficiently to suggest: "Hadn't you better wait, Johnnie, until you have learned that definition?"

The shot passed over the young man's head, and the spirit of fun cropping as usual to the surface, he pronounced with a grin: "Honest injun, your come-back was *some* class, believe *me!* I'd laugh m'self, if I wasn't so sore!"

A CHILD IN A MEXICAN GARDEN

By GRACE HAZARD CONKLING

BELLS

The town is full of bells that ring
A different tune for everything;
High and loud, soft and low,
Across the air they come and go.

When I am playing in the grass,
Above my head they float and pass;
They must have wings, for it is far
To where the spires and towers are.

Like elves they are with voices sweet
That travel fast on nimble feet;
I almost see them running there
All silver-slippered, on the air.

But Pablo says that bells are made
Of shiny iron like his spade,
And never leave their homes at all,
But to each other sing and call.

I hear them when the sun goes down,
In chorus all about the town;
And when I'm tucked away in bed
They go on ringing in my head.

RAIN

When the sky turns feather-gray,
    Like a gray dove's wing,
Then I know the rain is coming
    Over everything;
Feather-light and soft it falls,
Blown across the garden walls.

All those little rain-feathers,
    Dropping from the sky,
Make me glad and shivery,
    And I don't know why,
Blowing silver all about,
Till they shut the garden out.

I should like to feel the rain;
    I should like to be
Something growing in the garden—
    Grass or flower or tree.
Wonder why they make me stay
Indoors on a rainy day!

THE PEACOCK

Gold and blue and silver gray,
    Purple on his breast,
He is dressed the very way
    Kings and queens are dressed;
In his trailing tail of green,
Colors I have never seen
    Glitter with the rest.

I could play with such a bird
    All day long, but he
Spreads his tail without a word—
    Turns his back on me!
Proud and stiff he struts and stalks
Up and down the gravel walks,
    Haughty as can be.

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THE YARN OF THE UKULELE

By Virgil Jordan

ONCE upon a time a gay party from the American colony in Berlin took a young American clergyman, with much surreptitious winking, into a certain Berlin music-hall not greatly hampered by artistic or conventional considerations. They sat watching a troupe of Hawaiians going through the hulahula dance to the insinuating quaver of the singing guitar, the soft woody thrum of the ukulele, and the drowsy beat of the pahu drum. When the palm-clad natives had wriggled themselves off the stage, the clergyman turned to his companions with soaring eyebrows and said: "Why—er—what do you mean? Shades of Lord Sandwich, that was perfectly proper!" . . . .

Well, it wasn't—hardly. Both dance and music were a long way in spirit from the days of Kamehameha the Great. But the young minister's *faux pas* was not his fault. Remembering from his theological course that the Christianization of the Sandwich Islands was officially declared complete in 1863 didn't save him. He had been tripped up by the highly colored Hawaiian yarns that were even then beginning to be spun by the busy phonograph disk and the insidious cabaret-singer of his native land.

How many phonographs are merrily whirling away the reputation of the old Kanakas even the largest talking-machine company is too bashful to confess. Every one knows that the so-called hulahula dance is to be seen in the best ballrooms under different names. And every other week-ender's valise now contains that vest-pocket guitar which weighs only a few ounces but is such a heavy burden on the shoulders of the few surviving scions of the ancient and glorious Hawaiian race.

The love for the wicked wiles of this piquant little instrument far outdoes the banjo fad which so comparatively mildly occupied us a generation ago. How many exceedingly youthful persons are wallowing in the illusion that they are voicing all the devilish languor of the tropics in its plaintive thrums, not even the shade of Anthony Comstock knows. There are twelve large factories turning out from one to two thousand per month. There are many smaller ones making a hundred or so a month. Where? To be sure the importation of Hawaiian musical instruments from Hawaii has quadrupled during the past four years; but even the last year's arrival would barely be sufficient to supply the younger set of Flatbush. Overnight there has grown up in places a long, long way from Honolulu a whole library of musical literature, which must surely puzzle the psalm-loving Hawaiian.

Yes; there goes the cat. The trouble—the only trouble with most of this naughty Hawaiian stuff is that it is really neither Hawaiian nor naughty. Of course the Sandwich Islanders are as good as any one to tie our little pleasantries to. They are far, far away. They can not resent it. There are practically none of them left to do so. No, just a minute: perhaps the Hawaii Promotion Committee contains a few real, full-blooded Hawaiians. This Committee has recently issued a warning and a protest to the entertainment managers of this country, saying: "Hawaiian music, as it is composed and sold here is Hawaiian music at its best, and no one will have any apologies to make for its quality. But the managers of the East have changed much of the spirit of the songs, and Hawaii is not going to benefit by it."

The trouble, of course, all began with Captain James Cook of the English Admiralty. Hawaii discovered Captain Cook in 1778. Hardly any one, it seems, has yet discovered Hawaii. Certainly Captain

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Jim didn't. The Hawaiians of that time didn't at all appeal to Captain Jim nor his crew. There were about 400,000 of them —awfully unsophisticated and dull, don't you know. A playful, childlike, deeply religious lot, tall, straight, strong and very good-looking, with all sorts of tabus and

The simple Hawaiians poured forth yards of this sort of thing in vain. Captain Jim could not tell the difference between their kanikaus or dirges and their ipos or love-songs. He speaks only of "a solemn kind of song accompanied by a drum."

He was not a whit more interested by

THERE IS NOTHING DISTINCTIVELY HAWAIIAN ABOUT IT.

temperance regulations and all that. A mixture of the ancient Greeks and Hindus, so the ethnologist says—a chip of the very block from which Captain Jim and his crew were nicked—but Oh, Lord! without any of the advantages of their liberal education.

These Sandwich Islanders, as he called them, were always singing and dancing, but their performances bored the captain excessively. He couldn't say why. Their songs were full enough of changes of time and effects of syncopation that would have delighted Irving Berlin, and they never made any allusion whatever to marriage or connubial bliss. But they somehow lacked something. Even then, they must have seemed to him somewhat like the Hebrew psalms.

Oh, Lihue, she is gone.
Sniff the sweet scent of the grass,
The sweet scent of the wild vines.
They are twisted about by the brook Waikola,
By the winds of Waiopua.
My flower!
As if a mote were in my eye,
The pupil of my eye is troubled,
Dimness covers my eyes. Woe is me, Oh!

their hula dance. In those days the hula was a religious service to the sylvan goddess of music and the dance, dealing with the mysteries of Polynesian mythology. In this there did not seem to be anything so universal in its appeal as to get over to the captain. Besides, it was guarded by priestly rites, and the dancers were required to deny themselves certain articles of food and refrain from all impropriety of conduct. How the world do move!

Though the captain was no American, it is easy to see how all this cried for more "pep." The gentle Kanakas regarded him as a god, and were naturally anxious to spare him all the ennui possible. How far the elevation of these Hawaiian arts to the civilized level went under the cultural influence of the merrie English, it is impossible to say. After a while the natives seemed to find them too difficult to amuse, even for gods, and they killed Captain Jim and buried his bones with much reverence.

For the next forty years Kamehameha the Great, the William Jennings Bryan of

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Hawaii, seems to have tried his best to restore the solemnity to his native arts. But the Hawaiians had already become famous. The Americans had heard of them: it was too late. In 1820 our missionaries descended upon the Paradise of the Pacific, and by 1863 had completely reformed the 143,000 Adams and Eves whom Captain Cook had introduced to the rudiments of civilization. When the course was completed there remained some 43,000 Hawaiians to enjoy its blessings. The descendants of the ancient Greeks were clothed in complete suits of clothing, made to live in houses, taught to read and write and long for office positions. They showed great interest in the novel idea of marriage, and since the fee was only a bunch of onions or something like that, as many as four thousand of them were married in a single year after the missionaries came.

No more hulas, no more ipos, of course. Instead the English Hymnal. And be it said to their credit, the incorrigibly musical Hawaiians did what they could with it. They have never been daunted by anything like that, not even by the strange fancies of the composers of Hawaiian stuff for the Broadway shows. They mixed it liberally with the dash of the surf, the cry of the wind, and the warmth of the tropical sun, and half a century later gave it back to the descendants of those very missionaries, listening, like the young American clergyman, to an occasional cabaret and marveling at the mildness of it all.

But Captain Jim, the Hymnal, and the Puritans had not "done for the rest." Enter therefore at this point Captain Henri Berger, for forty-three years leader of the Royal Hawaiian Band, and sent by the gods to rescue ravished Hawaii from the barbarian *Kultur* of Captain Cook, Englishman and violator of the rights of small musical nations. As a Hawaiian, Henri could not help being a musical hyphenate. Never could he rid his homeward-turning thoughts of *Aus einem fernen Strande* and the other pious folksongs of his Vaterland. If there were no accordions or tubas to play them on, well, ukuleles or taropatches would do.

In this day it needs no long explanation to make clear why Captain Berger is called the greatest influence in the musical life of the Islands. The German *lieder* afforded the final homey touch necessary to complete the quiet native domesticity of the Hawaiian art. It required a true *Deutscher* to write the Hawaiian national hymn. So Kalakaua, the last of the kings of Hawaii, did the words, the German bandmaster did the music, and they called it the now famous "Hawaii Ponoi." When the Captain finally retired last year, the Hawaiian House of Representatives presented him with an engrossed series of resolutions appreciative of his faithful services.

Thus it is that when the ukuleles thrum out *Mai Poina Oe Ta'u* in Berlin cabarets, the burghers join affectingly in with the *Nachtigal-Lied*, which is the same thing—and young American tourists look bored.

To spread this deliciously piquant mixture of English hymns and German folksongs it was naturally necessary to have a risqué native instrument. The native ones would hardly do. Good gracious! The old Hawaiians used to accompany their long-winded dirges in biblical fashion by blowing upon conch-shells, and that wouldn't get over the foot-lights now at all. It would have to be something—you know—tunka lunk Ah there! It would also have to be something that might be advertised as a native instrument.

They found the very thing in a diminutive Spanish guitar which some roving Portuguese seems to have introduced about forty years ago. To be of good tone for such a small instrument it should be made of kao wood or a sort of Hawaiian mahogany; but you can sing that ribald Hawaiian-arrangement-of-the-English-hymn-"Old Hundred"-by-a-German-bandmaster-on-a-small-Spanish-guitar-invented-by-a-Portuguese just as well whether it is made of kao or cigar-boxes. Hawaii's share in it is this: To the ingenuous Hawaiian mind it suggested something that always went with the civilizers, whose music it was intended to accompany. So they called it the ukulele, which means a dancing flea!

All the same, we might have a little real Hawaiian music now and then if we could only find a few Hawaiians. There are only about 10,000 left in this evangelized Paradise, and these are hardly thoroughbreds.

It takes a pretty good barbarian to stand the white man's music and all that it is the accompaniment of. The simple Hawaiian has always been a too-ready learner in music and much besides.

And, you see, he may even be taught to play the ukulele!

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THE FREE LANCE AND THE FAKER

HAPPY DAYS IN AUSTRIA, WITH EVERYTHING BUT NEWS.

An Inside Story of War Reporting

By William G. Shepherd

SKETCHES BY BOARDMAN ROBINSON

These articles by Mr. Shepherd are the first frank, full answer to the questions that we constantly ask as we read reports from the front. Last month Mr. Shepherd answered the question: How much do war correspondents really see? This month the question is: Do war reporters tell the truth? The answer is both a startling revelation and a reassurance.

Mr. Shepherd has had a remarkably varied experience. He has reported the war from every important battle-front in Europe. As correspondent of the United Press, he covered the destruction of Belgium; he was the only newspaper man who saw the second battle of Ypres; he was the first American reporter permitted at the British front in France. He has been at the German front; with the Austrians at Przemysl; with the Italians in the Trieste district; he reported four of the greatest retreats of the war, including the retreat of the Austrians, and later that of the Servians, from Servia.—THE EDITORS.

THERE have been three stages in war correspondents' activities in the Great War. Every one of them might have been noticed by the careful newspaper reader if he had read between the lines of the war dispatches.

The first stage may be known as the "free-lance days." The public, news-hungry, was often misled in that period. In the mass of war news, no small amount of fake and lies was fed to it by unscrupulous adventurers who were not trained correspondents and who had no reputation for veracity to sustain.

The second stage is called by European war correspondents the "dark ages." The public suffered in this stage too, because, though it got fewer fakes and fewer unreliable stories, it got no other news of any sort, except the official reports; and these it had learned to take with a grain of salt.

The third stage, the one we have entered only recently, is the stage of the new twentieth-century war correspondent.

The harum-scarumness of those early

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"NEWSPAPER MEN ARE ONLY CIVILIANS TO ME."

free-lance days is almost unbelievable, as one looks back on it now. Every word that a correspondent wrote for the news-hungry public was pure gold. Never, in the modern world, did news count for so much in the lives of so many millions of people as it did during those first months of the Great War. Not a word that a correspondent wrote in those days was overlooked by the news-seeking millions. News, lies, local color, human interest, fakes, all went down the great public gullet in Gargantuan gulps.

Because the war began in Belgium, the experiences of the war correspondent began there also. The first real war news and the first real war fakes came from there.

Who "saved" the American consulate at Antwerp when the Germans seized the town? American correspondents in Europe are still debating this question, and the lie has been passed more than once in the discussion, because three different sets of correspondents claim the distinction.

It was like this: As the Germans approached Antwerp many sagacious humans fled the town, among them some of the consulate employees and officials. Shells were falling on the city, and those of the correspondents who were not joining in the retreat were hiding in cellars.

After the shell-fire had ceased, some of the American correspondents who came out of hiding—and, be it understood, they can not be blamed for having hid—made their way to the consulate, and, finding no one there, proceeded to "save" it from some imaginary danger that has not yet been made clear.

Who did the "saving"? That's the question. Americans have read at least three different thrilling stories of the incident. The consulate stood on a little side street, two doors off the main street, but there was a jog in the latter which made it possible to obtain a view of the main street for a distance of about two blocks. Was the "rescuer" a moving-picture man who hurried to the consulate when he saw the Germans were marching into the town, placed his camera in one of the windows, and, under the shelter of the American flag and a window-curtain, photographed the lines of incoming conquerors, not knowing that he was the only human being in the house?

Or was it a correspondent from a small newspaper who, entering the place and finding it empty, sat down at the consul's desk and wrote a story about how he had taken charge of the deserted American consulate? Is it true that this correspondent made two copies of the story, left one by accident

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on a table, and thus played into the hands of a third correspondent who found it and wired it to his own newspaper as his own experience?

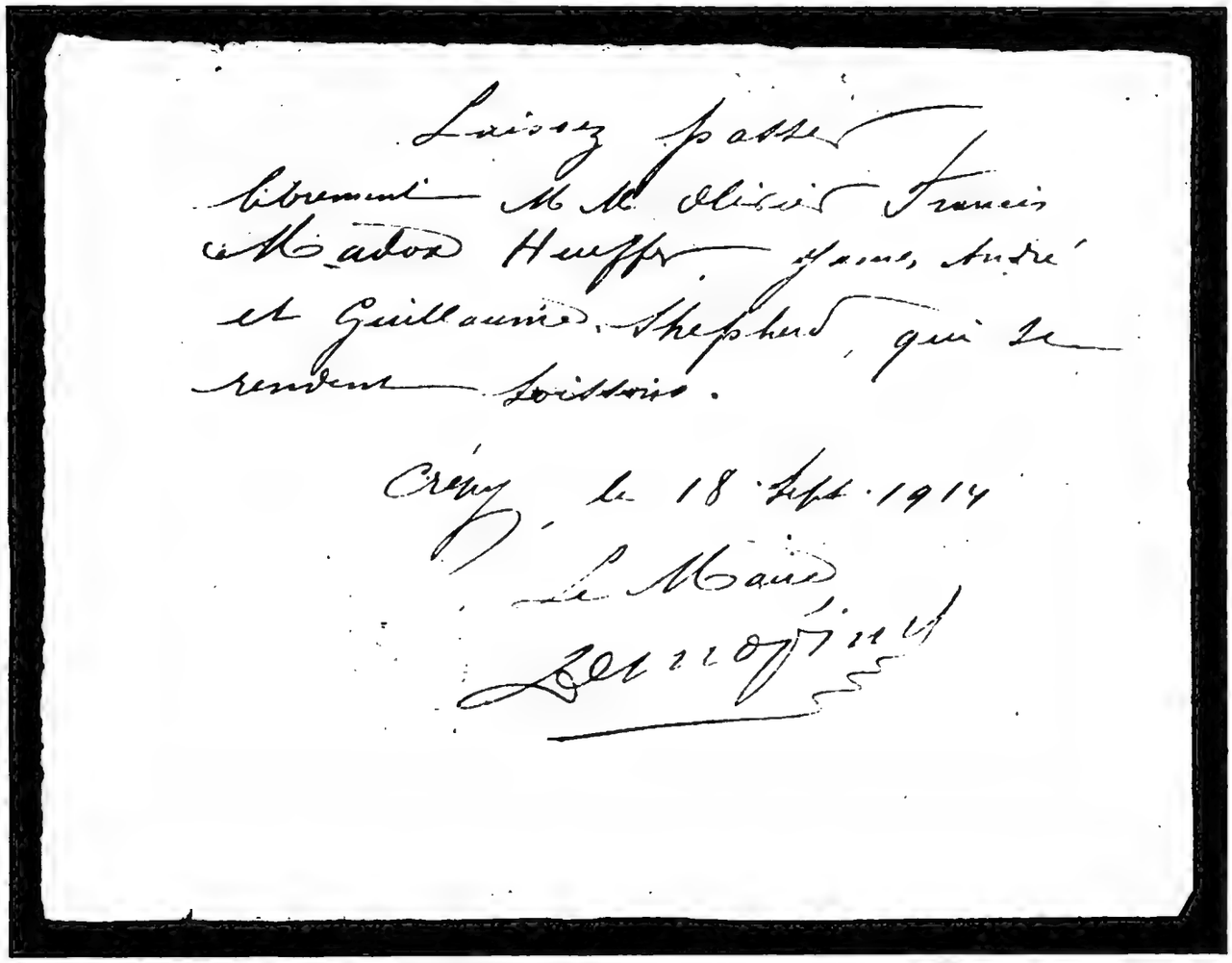
None of us war correspondents knows the truth.

"War is the Faker's Opportunity"

THOSE were the good old days in the Great War, those days when war correspondents, unbidden, unwelcome, deluged Belgium and the northern part of France. They were the free-and-easy days when, if a man were a faker at heart, he could fake to his heart's content with no one to deny his stories, no one to question his alibis.

Adventurers rushed from the United States at the outbreak of war, usually traveling on their own money, carrying credentials from some newspaper that was only too glad to have a correspondent in Europe at no expense to itself. With such credentials these same adventurers saved themselves from capture now and then, and between times made themselves heroes at home by faking stories of their own valiant deeds and great dangers.

The American public read a mass of rot in those days in its daily allotment of war news. It did not know the difference between the truth and the lie; neither did the editors. While the scandal of faking was hot among us, and while we were bandying about the legend, "War is the faker's opportunity," the fakers were lying shamelessly to the American public about battles they had never seen, battles that had never occurred, about deeds that they had never performed.



THE FRENCH MAYOR'S PASS THAT CARRIED THE AUTHOR TO SOISSONS. A BRITISH OFFICER WITH NO RESPECT FOR CIVIL PASSES CONFISCATED IT.

These fakes were intended, in the main, to impress readers with the writer's prowess and bravery. One result is that several names of American newspaper writers which are synonymous with heroism in the mind of newspaper readers are synonymous with faking in the knowledge of other newspaper writers. Their fakery, in the main, was not

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injurious, but there have been instances where their work has produced serious results—especially in their reports of German atrocities in Belgium. For the supreme news-cheating of all the war was done in Belgium.

The German Atrocities

LET me say, right here, in view of what I shall say next, that my sympathies are strongly pro-Ally. I have been with armies on both sides in the Great War. I have been in all the warring countries, except Rumania and Russia, and after all that I have seen and heard and learned, my once neutral mind has settled itself into the Ally groove. I am convinced that humanity will gain more from an Allied victory than from German success. Yet, in spite of this I am bound to say, knowing what I do of the business of war news, that every American who has based his ideas of German atrocities in Belgium on newspaper reports of the early, free-lance days, is carrying a vast amount of misinformation in his head.

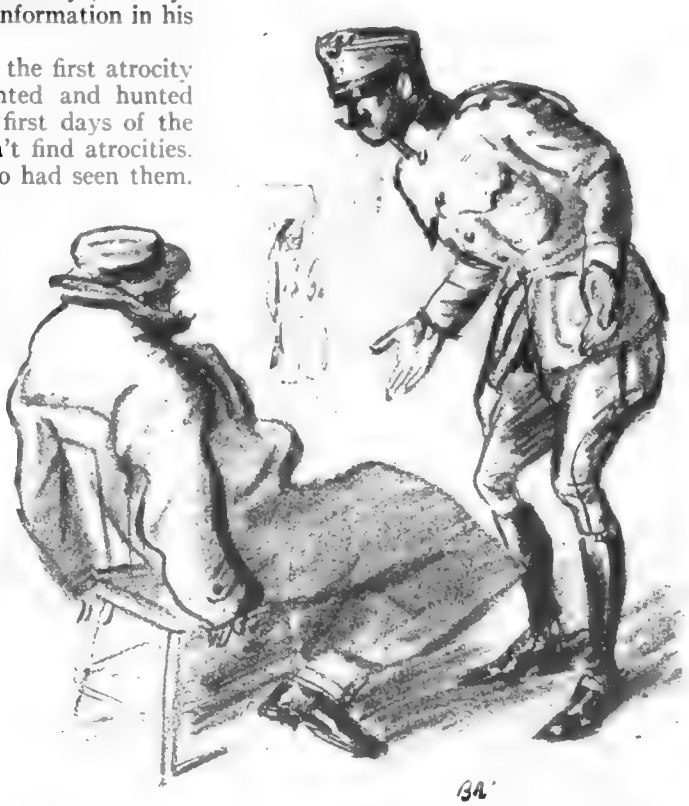
I was in Belgium when the first atrocity stories went out. I hunted and hunted for atrocities during the first days of the atrocity scare. I couldn't find atrocities. I couldn't find people who had seen them. I traveled on trains with Belgians who had fled from the German lines and I spent much time among Belgian refugees. I offered sums of money for photographs of children whose hands had been cut off or who had been wounded or injured in other ways.

I never found a first-hand Belgian atrocity story; and when I ran down the second-hand stories they all petered out.

Yet in those days there were newspaper men around me, spending their time as I spent mine, living in the same hotel with me, eating at the same cafés and often at the same table, making the same news rounds that I made, who were sending their daily budget of atrocity stories back to the United States. I am only telling the truth when I say that the first Belgian atrocity stories to reach the United States from Belgium were those of certain correspondents whose reputations among American newspaper men are those of arch-fakers, and who, since the early days in Belgium, have lied about so many other things that they have since become discredited in newspaper circles.

"I attended the funeral, yesterday afternoon, of a hand," said one of those correspondents importantly as he seated himself at my table one noon in the Hotel St. Antoine in Antwerp. "It was the hand of an old man, and it had been cut off by a German soldier. I'll bet I make the front pages of the New York papers this morning with my story."

I don't know whether he did or not, but I do know that, at the very time when he



"YOU MAY REMAIN IN UDINE IF YOU WISH TO; BUT IF YOU DO, WE'LL BE FORCED TO SHOOT YOU."

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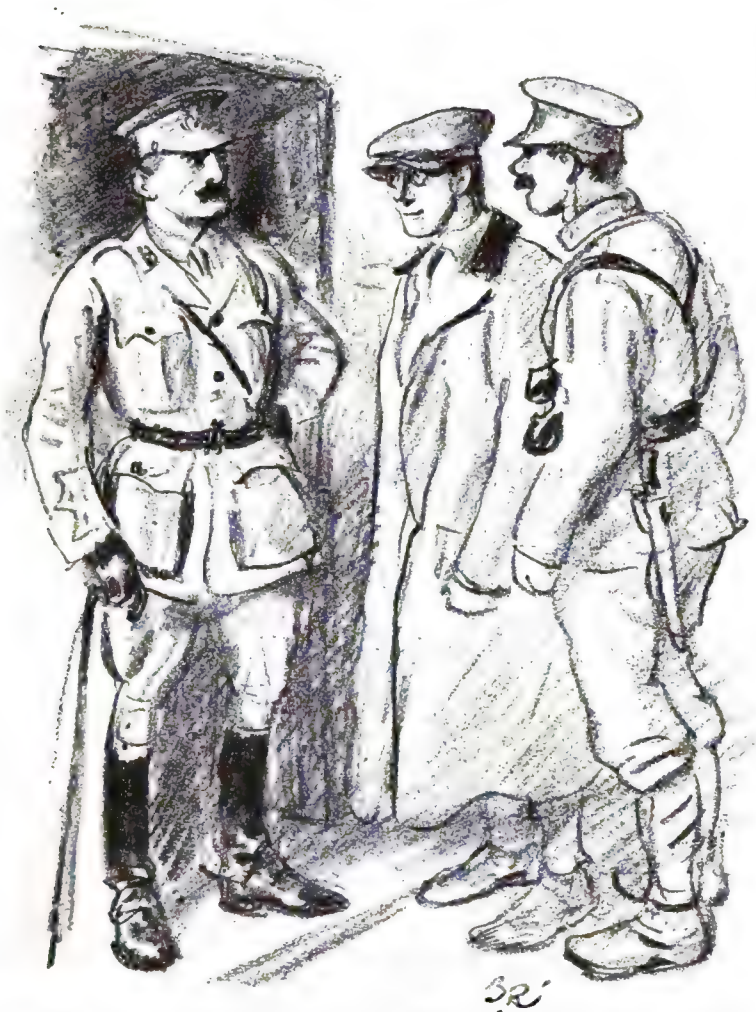

WHENEVER THE COLONEL HAD AN ARRESTED CORRESPONDENT BROUGHT INTO HIS PRESENCE, HE SHIPPED HIM BACK TO PARIS, WITH A SCOLDING.

was supposed to have been at this grotesque funeral, he was playing billiards in a café.

These correspondents witnessed no more horrors than I did during the time that I was in Belgium, yet they never withheld details of horrors. Stories of old men being shot; of children putting forth their hands to have them cut off by German sabers; of women with children being bayoneted, flew from their typewriters with astonishing rapidity as soon as they discovered that such stories were proving of interest to American newspaper readers.

In all fairness to the great newsgathering agencies of the United States, the Associated Press, the United Press, the International News, and the smaller agencies on which so many American newspapers have depended for their news during the war, I must say that they are to be exonerated of faking in this serious matter of the Belgian atrocities.

I should add that I have no reason to question the word of men of high standing who have reported the commission of frightful deeds in Belgium. I can only tell of what is compassed by my own experience.

Petty Faking

THE lesser faking to which American readers were sometimes subjected in the early days, was not unentertaining.

A certain little circle of fakers—pariahs among the responsible correspondents—included one man who wrote that he had been arrested as a spy by the French on the outskirts of a village, handcuffed to German prisoners, and led into the village, with a French crowd trying to get at him with their knives. He did not know, when he wrote the story, that certain American correspondents were also under arrest in the village at the same time and saw him, under arrest, escorted gently by a French officer to the outskirts of the town, where he mounted a bicycle and rode away without molestation.

"I was riding on a train near Paris," ran the story of one man who faked a whole battle in France, "when we suddenly heard

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shooting. The train stopped and we got off, and, looking over a hill, we saw a battle in full swing. As I looked, I saw one soldier jab another through the head with his bayonet."

His story, coming early in the war as the first eye-witness story of a battle, received flattering attention and huge headlines. But he was later recalled because of his unreliability.

"I was at the front last night," said one of these faking correspondents to me, one morning in Paris—the war had been on only three weeks and I was interested. "Yes, I was sitting here in the hotel lobby when a man in uniform came up to me and said, 'Come on, Mr. Newspaper Man, and I'll give you a ride.' We got into his car, and rode for about three hours. Then he took me into a ditch where a lot of bullets were flying and we had a fine view of the battle."

To my certain knowledge, this young man had not left his room at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Paris that night, and yet some weeks later I came across an astonishingly interesting story, which appeared in two hundred and fifty or more American newspapers, of how this youth had spent that night on a battle-field.

American correspondents, however, were not the only offenders in the matter of faking.

The British correspondents had more to fear from the enemy than did the American writers, though most of them, with extraordinary bravery and coolness, remained to the last with American correspondents in the threatened towns of Belgium and northern France. A few beat retreats that were too hasty and so got out of touch with the news-centers. It then seemed advisable to some of them to draw on their imaginations for their news.

One British correspondent, favorably known for his conduct in other wars, stationed himself at Ostend, far out of the danger-zone, and sent from there such exciting stories of the proximity of the Germans and the danger of capture he himself was running that, by some process of psychology, the danger which he was imagining became very real to him. One day he took a boat and retreated to London, appearing in the editor's office in a state of "blue funk," with the story that he had remained in the Belgian town as long as it was safe to do so.

His story was published with a great flourish, making it appear that the noted correspondent was the last to leave the scene of the German advance. But for many days the correspondents of London newspapers remained in Ostend, and their daily stories sent from the town whence the famous war correspondent had fled, soon branded him a victim of his own imaginative yarns.

The Good Old Days

BUT if those early days of the war made faking easy, they were, nevertheless, happy times, too, for the honest newsgetter. We could get around in those days when we were regarded as "nothing more than civilians."

I heard that expression first on the same day that I heard the first shot in the Great War. That shot was fired under the window of my room in the Hotel St. Antoine at Antwerp, at 2:30 A. M., September 2, 1914. As I looked out of the window into the pitch-black streets, twenty more shots followed, and I heard distant cannon. I went to the bathroom and got a drink of water. I remember looking at the cast-iron bathtub and wondering whether bullets would pass through its sides. By the time I got to the window again forty thousand Belgian rifles and some hundreds of Belgian machine guns, together with some scores of Belgian artillery pieces, were all booming away with high frequency. The flashes all pointed upward into the sky.

I was seeing the first armed resistance against a Zeppelin. I saw the sparks on the bombs which the Zeppelin was dropping; I saw the bombs whirl through the air in mad circles; and I heard the terrific explosions. I knew that I had come across a great newspaper story. I got into my clothes and dashed down the stairs to the front door.

A soldier stood there. "You can't pass out," he said. "You'll be killed."

"Never mind that part of it," I said. "I'm a newspaper man and I've got business out there."

"Newspaper men are only civilians to me," said the soldier. "You can't go out."

Of course, that Belgian soldier and all the other soldiers I met who regarded newspaper men as he did, were wrong. The difference between a civilian and a newspaper man, that morning in the hotel lobby at

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Antwerp was, that the civilians remained in the lobby, while the newspaper man sneaked out through the kitchen, found a door into an alley, and made his way to the street to see what was going on.

After an hour the firing ceased. Daylight came, and as soon as the telegraph office was opened, I went there to wire my story to London—a story of the first battle against a Zeppelin.

There was a soldier at the entrance to the telegraph office who would not permit me to enter. I proved to him and to his superiors that I was a newspaper correspondent.

"Newspaper correspondents are only civilians to me," was their answer. "And what's more, even if you did give your story to the censor, he wouldn't send it."

Nevertheless the story was printed that night in New York and many other American cities. I found a man who was going to Ostend in an automobile. He carried my copy to the telegraph office in that town, and had no difficulty in getting the officials to send it.

The Belgian system had thus broken down twice within a few hours in its attempt to carry out the military theory that there was no such animal as a newspaper correspondent. This was the theory that was generally held in all the armies in Europe at the outset of the war. It was a theory that made possible the existence of the free-lance reporter, whether he was an honest and reliable newsgetter or a conscienceless faker.

"Going to Dunkirk"

OF COURSE, we played tricks in those days, I confess; we outwitted War Offices; we went where we were not wanted, and, if we were caught, we suffered for it.

There is a little dining-room in the railroad station at Calais which was used by more than one American war correspondent to outwit both the French and the Belgian War Offices in the first winter of the war. More than one American correspondent has sat in that station buffet forcing himself to swallow food he did not want, trembling in his shoes lest some French or Belgian officer should challenge his right to be there, while he played the famous trick of "Going to Dunkirk."

The correspondents always felt justified in working the "Going to Dunkirk" trick, because they believed that, in doing so, they were only beating the Belgian War Office at its own game. The Belgians, after the fall of Antwerp, would never refuse an American correspondent a pass to their lines beyond Dunkirk; their desire to please American correspondents was always apparent. But, to reach the Belgian lines, it was necessary to pass through the French lines at Calais, and the French invariably refused to permit correspondents to do this. The correspondents could not disabuse their minds of the impression that the French refusal was made with the approval of the Belgians. Wherefore, they set out to beat the game, as best they could. The dining-room trick did it.

It went like this:

The Calais railroad station was closely guarded by the French. If you wanted to leave Calais by train you were forced to go to the military authorities for passes which would permit you to enter the railroad station. Once inside the station, however, you might buy a railroad ticket for any point; your very presence in the station guaranteed that the French military authorities in the town of Calais had investigated you and granted you permission to travel.

But there were other ways of entering the Calais railroad station besides passing the sentry at the door with your military *laissez-passer*. We American correspondents discovered that by taking a train at Paris and alighting in the Calais railroad station, which was at the end of the Paris-Calais line, we could escape all challenges by sentries, if we only lay low and made ourselves inconspicuous. There was an evening train for Dunkirk, and, once you were in the Calais railroad station, you had only to buy a ticket for Dunkirk and wait until the train departed.

The little dining-room was the hiding-place. Upon alighting from the train from Paris you would ask a porter to carry your baggage into the dining-room, which opened directly on to the station platform. There you would go through the form of eating until within a few minutes of train time. Then, leaving your baggage in the dining-room, you would saunter out to the ticket-office, purchase your ticket with as little fuss as possible, saunter back to the dining-room, call a porter, and go out to the train through the dining-room door.

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Two hours later you would be in Dunkirk, carrying your Belgian pass, which the Belgians could not well refuse to honor.

We all knew that the time would come when one of us would be caught at the buffet trick and that the correspondent who was caught would wish he had stayed in Paris. But the newspaper stories which we got along the Belgian front were too precious to lose. No American newspaper correspondent was ever caught at the game of "Going to Dunkirk." It fell, instead, to the lot of an Englishman, Lucien Jones, a son of Henry Arthur Jones, the playwright, representative of the London *Chronicle*. Jones went to Dunkirk three times in succession, after the Belgians had twice expelled him, and his persistent reappearances caused the military officials to seek out the hole in their military system whereby the correspondents were leaking into their lines.

Into jail he went; it was only through the efforts of the British Foreign Office and the prominence of his father that he secured his release. The military authorities were so angry at him that when I tried to send him a cheese from my hotel in Dunkirk, where I was held awaiting exportation, they refused to let him have it.

And who tipped off the trick to the authorities? A newspaper man who, when a colleague in kindness told him how he could get to Dunkirk by using the Calais dining-room as a hiding-place, sat down in his hotel in Paris and wrote a story saying that he *had* got to Dunkirk and the Belgian front, and telling how he had done it. It was a lie that put Jones into jail for three weeks, and ended our trips to Dunkirk, where the news-picking was always good.

Sharp Wits — and Penalties

THERE were two rumored punishments for war correspondents who got to the front without passes in those days. One was death by shooting; the other, imprisonment in a fortress for the length of the war. In those old days when we were considered mere civilians with no rights that any one was bound to respect, we used often to talk of those mythical punishments; but to this day I have never heard of any correspondent's suffering either penalty.

We are tagged and listed now in little black books that can be found at any frontier or in any army headquarters, but in those happy-go-lucky early days of the war the armies had not learned how to control us. The great machinery of that cyclonic blast of war that hit the civilized world of 1914 left newspaper correspondents entirely out of its operations. It ignored them, and therefore it had no way of dealing with them. We puzzled the generals. The rules said: "No newspaper correspondents allowed." But there were always American newspaper correspondents around somewhere.

The weather man might as well make a rule that there shall be no rain in April.

The Germans began the war with a rule against correspondents, but when they got to Brussels, they found a nest of American correspondents awaiting them. In their forward rush they overtook John McCutcheon, Irvin Cobb, and others. The late Richard Harding Davis marched alongside the German hordes that were advancing on Paris. The English rules were as strict as the German; but American correspondents were in the retreat from Mons, and all the regulations of General French's army as to the disposal of off-side war correspondents broke down. The army men were too busy retreating to worry about punishing a poor war correspondent who was trying as hard to get away as they were.

I have a crumpled piece of paper, among my souvenirs, which took me to Soissons; incidentally, it puzzled, beyond measure, a whole townful of British and French officers. The mayor of Crépy-en-Valois gave it to me; it set forth that I was to be permitted to pass along the road to Soissons. The truth was that the mayor had no right to give me such a pass; but he didn't know it and I didn't know it, though I did suspect, at the time, that the pass might be questioned. All the soldiers I met along the road were men who had been soldiers only a few weeks and to whom a paper signed by a mayor carried as much weight as a paper signed by a general. They were better acquainted with mayors than with generals, in fact, and wherever I presented this bit of paper I was welcomed with a smile and permitted to pass.

That piece of paper symbolizes as deep pleasure as I have ever had in my life. It threw open to me the beautiful tree-fringed roads. It was autumn; the days were golden and a full moon lighted the nights; the

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biggest war in the world was on; and I, with this magic piece of paper, was free to go as I could among the French and British armies, so long as I seemed to be heading for Soissons. This thrill lasted two days until a British officer, who couldn't read French and who had no respect for bits of paper signed by French mayors, took the pass from me and placed me under arrest.

"You've no right running around with a piece of paper like that," he said. "It's absolutely no good. You'll have to stay in this little town until I wire to headquarters to find out what to do with you." And thereby the colonel—one of the most gracious men I met in the war—let himself in for a world of trouble. He conferred with French and British officers in the town. On their advice he telegraphed to General French's headquarters that he had arrested a correspondent without military passes; he wanted to know what to do with him.

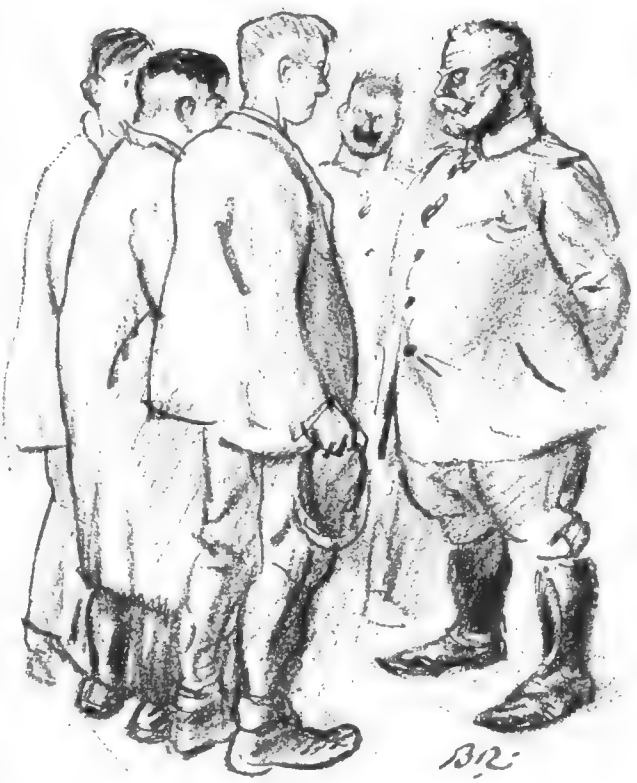
Every day for six days I went to the colonel's office to learn my fate. On the sixth day he said:

"Well, I'll have to let you go. They're too damn busy fighting to answer my telegram. But I do know," he added, "that they won't want you here seeing everything that's going on."

And along the tree-fringed roads I returned to Paris. After that, whenever the colonel, who was an intelligent officer, had an arrested correspondent brought into his presence, he merely shipped him back to Paris, with a scolding.

That was two and a half years ago. What would happen to a correspondent today if he were to attempt to reach a forbidden position without passes?

It is terrible to contemplate. He would be taken back to London or Paris or Berlin or Vienna and turned loose there. But his name would go down on the correspondents' black book. Soon would come the day when Monsieur Ponsot, of the French Foreign Office, or Mr. Montgomery of the British Foreign Office, Mr. Zimmermann of the German Foreign Office, or Count Montlong in Vienna, would be arranging a trip of correspondents to the front. Our hero would appear at the Foreign Office and request that his name be put on the list. He would be met, smilingly, perhaps, but *he wouldn't take the trip*. Days would pass and weeks and months without summons to the frontward expeditions, and then the truth would dawn upon him that his name was on the black books, and that never again in the Great War would he be permitted to see the front.



THE GERMANS WERE PUZZLED BY THE PRESENCE OF WAR CORRESPONDENTS IN THEIR MIDST.

And when he started to return, he would discover, at every frontier, that his name was in the little black book which the spy-catchers at every frontier have in their possession; and that they had received orders to permit him to move in only one

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direction, said direction being toward the United States.

The Free Lance

I HAVE so far told of the conditions governing war writing only on the Ally side. But on the German side, the same happy-go-lucky system of war corresponding was under way. John McCutcheon, Irvin S. Cobb, and several other American writers left Brussels and went forward to meet the oncoming Germans. For over a week they were traveling in the "no man's land" between the two armies, not knowing whether they were the tail-end of the British retreat or the advance-guard of the German rush. The Germans decided it by catching up to them and arresting them.

THE NEWSPAPER MAN SNEAKED OUT THROUGH THE KITCHEN.

While these American correspondents were watching the German advance, Robert Dunn, of the New York *Evening Post*, and other correspondents, were in the British rout, and between the stories which have been written by both sets of correspondents the American public learned first-hand of what happened, during those stirring days, on both sides. Which is more, thanks to the censorship, than the public of any of the warring countries has learned to this day.

The Germans, too, were puzzled by the presence of war correspondents in their midst.

"There are no war correspondents with the German army," a certain general declared to the culprits who were brought before him.

"Beg pardon, general," said Cobb, "there are three of us."

Within a few weeks these same correspondents had been recognized by the War Office at Berlin and were permitted to visit various scenes of German triumph.

These happy days of free-lancing never existed in Austria. American correspondents who went there found conditions far different from what they were in other parts of the war zone. From the very first day of the war, the correspondents in that country—German, Austrian, and neutral—were recognized by the Government. In fact, the war started off with a boom for war correspondents in the dual monarchy. One hundred and eighteen writers were accredited to the army. They included Germans, Austrians, Swiss, Swedes, Danes, and Americans.

They purchased, under army instructions, horses, saddles, costumes, and firearms, and were established in a *Kriegspresse-Quartier*

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in a little town some ninety miles behind the front, under Colonel John, curator of the war museum in Vienna. They lived like lords and officers in those days. While their brother correspondents were scouting around France and Belgium, free-lancing, feeding themselves, and sleeping where they could, these writers in the Austrian press headquarters, were enjoying a course of study and practise in what might have been termed a "war correspondents' school." Every morning they got on their horses and rode in a circle, riding-school fashion, around a riding instructor. Later in the day they filled a near-by forest with the sounds of revolver practise. Their food was given to them, free—splendid Hungarian wines included—in a great mess-hall; and every man got tobacco and cigarettes as part of his rations.

In fact, these men got everything they wanted—except news.

While the correspondents in Austria, with all their luxuries, were looking forward, with little hope, to the time when they might get to the front, the uncredentialed reporters on the Ally side were seeing all that was to be seen.

But the war correspondent's game was changing on both sides. The Austrian correspondents soon lost their horses, which were commandeered for the army. Their revolvers proved useless for anything but shooting at trees. They passed miserable hours in waiting for promised trips to the front which did not materialize. When I reached the Austrian press headquarters in October of 1914, after the fall of Antwerp, I found the writers there a discontented and altogether miserable lot.

"The Dark Ages"

IT WAS the fall of Antwerp that ended the happy, free-lancing days on the Ally side. An old-time war correspondent remarked with a sigh as he crossed the Scheldt River and departed from Antwerp in the retreat: "Antwerp has fallen; thank God, the day of the free-lance faker has passed!"

And then came what the war correspondents call the "dark ages," when the War Offices came to look on correspondents not as unclassified civilians, but as pests who must be kept down. Oh, the dark, hopeless days that we spent waiting in the capitals, helpless, unable to move. In London there were at least thirty war writers practically prisoners. We could not move from London. There were orders against us; the French were instructed to "pick up" certain of us who tried to cross the Channel to France. The little black books were coming into being; the spring of 1915 saw their birth. You might have gone into the American bar at the Savoy Hotel in London, any evening at five o'clock in those days, and seen from a dozen to a score of famous war writers who were marooned in the British capital.

Paris, in those "dark ages," was as desolate as London. I found the correspondents there in the spring of 1915 almost desperate from inaction. Henry's bar was their meeting-place, and there they exchanged their tales of woes. The War Office would not recognize them; they had been informed that any individual attempts on their part to get to the front by stealth or sneaking would be severely punished. One or two brave spirits who risked it were prevented from sending any news of any sort—even the daily *communique*—to their papers for the space of ten days. Richard Harding Davis, Phil Simms, Charles Wythe Williams, Henry Beach Needham—all were at one time or another silenced by such punishment.

I was a wanderer during those "dark ages." I hurried to Rome, hoping that perhaps the Italians had not heard of the newest wrinkle in War Office procedure regarding correspondents. It looked bright in Italy for a little while. I got on a train and went, with difficulty, to Udine, the Italian headquarters. It was a big moment when I got off the train in that headquarters town. While all the correspondents in London were longing vainly to get to the British headquarters, and all the correspondents in Paris yearning hopelessly to get to where General Joffre held forth—by blindly traveling I had taken a chance and had reached the town from which General Cadorna conducted the campaign of the Italian army. I got all the thrill of the old free-lance days in Belgium and France when the open road stretched before any fellow who had the nerve to take it. Again I was to tramp over fields and farms, sleep and eat as I could, and write stories of war at first-hand.

That was a glorious evening in Udine;

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the star of hope was brighter than any of the other lights in the soft Italian sky that gleamed above us as we dined in the garden of the quaint old Italian inn. And what a dreamless, happy sleep, that night!

Breakfast started off gloriously, because after breakfast I was going to begin to see things.

"Signor Shepherd?"

I looked up and beheld a detective. He didn't need a star to identify him. He had the curling mustache, the thick-soled shoes, the turtle's forehead, and the stump of a cigar which all detectives possess.

"I'm him," I said, not wasting good grammar.

"You may finish your breakfast. I will wait for you."

All the gentlemen I met within the next sixty minutes were kind but firm in their declaration that I could not remain in Udine. The detectives even permitted me to go directly to General Cadorna's headquarters, where an Italian count, disguised as a soldier, received me most graciously and said:

"Well, you may remain in Udine if you wish to; but if you do, we'll be forced to shoot you."

Two hours later, because a train didn't leave sooner, I departed from Udine—having been escorted to the train by a detective—and returned to Rome. The "dark ages" were on in Italy, too. I was permitted, months later, to see something of the Italian fighting, but that was after I had become a decent, credentialed war reporter.

The "dark ages" were on in every warring country in Europe. In Petrograd, Stanley Washburn, John Bass, Walter Whiffen, and other American correspondents sat about the hotels of the Russian capital or shared the hospitality of Ray Baker, at the American Embassy. In Austria the correspondents had been moved from Alt-Sandec, a town near the Austrian headquarters, to a little village in the very center of the Austro-Hungarian empire, where they got less news than the newspaper readers in Budapest.

American newspaper readers got little news in those days from their correspondents in any part of the war zone. The fakers had nothing to fake about and the writers nothing to write.

The Twentieth-Century War Reporter

IT WAS a light that dawned in Germany, spreading through the War Offices of Europe, which finally dispelled the gloom of the "dark ages." The British kept their first battle of Ypres a secret from the world for four months. But the Germans were guilty of a stupidity almost as great, for von Hindenburg's first defeat of the Russian army in the Mazurian lake region did not reach the world until Karl von Wiegand, then of the United Press, discovered the battle as a news story, and persuaded the German War Office to let him go to Eastern Prussia and make a news story out of the victory.

That one story served to prove to the Germans the value of proper publicity. Within a short time they had appointed a man in the War Office whose sole duty was to arrange for trips for war correspondents to the various fronts.

The Allies soon felt the force of this German move. While desperate correspondents on the Ally side were either sending out fake and imaginative stories, or were passing their days in idleness in the Ally capitals, the correspondents in Germany were glorifying German arms by their stories of German doings. To offset the German propaganda, the Allies began to grant certain privileges to correspondents, and these privileges exist to-day.

With the memories of the good old days behind them, and with the "dark ages" only recently passed, the war correspondents in Europe to-day have moved into the third era of their existence, the era of the twentieth-century war correspondent.

The like of the twentieth-century war correspondent has never been seen before. He is a patented war correspondent. You find him on both sides. He had been tested in a hundred ways as to his dependability and his sympathies. He is tabulated on the military records. His headquarters are always in some European capital, and he makes it a point to keep in daily touch with the War Office. He visits these offices regularly, like a police reporter, or a city-hall reporter doing his daily rounds. Once in a while, he is told that he may pack up his field kit and take a trip to the front. With a few other correspondents, on a certain day, he will make a tour of certain interesting places, after which he

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returns to the capital, writes a story of what he has seen, and then goes back to his daily grind of office visiting.

Most of the faking of the old days is gone. The free-lance adventurer who used to write his entertaining fakes has dropped out of the game, though harmless fakes, intended merely to glorify the writer while not misleading the public on an important matter, even now find their way into print occasionally. Such a story was that of the correspondent who, after being presented to President Poincaré, of France, with a number of other correspondents—a purely formal proceeding—wrote that "the President of France, learning that I was with a party of correspondents, sent a courier across the fields to ask me to come to meet him. He thanked me for all I had written in support of the Ally cause."

AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS AT PETROGRAD, WAITING TO GO TO THE FRONT.

President Poincaré speaks no English, and this particular correspondent speaks no French; and what really occurred was that, as the line of correspondents passed the French president, this one, coming to his turn, offered his hand, smiled—and passed on down the line.

The new twentieth-century war correspondent knows a great deal about war, in spite of the restraints put upon him. He is under fire, oftentimes, and he has a grasp of the technical side of war. He writes only about what he has actually seen or what comes to him from official sources, and his stories are strictly censored.

The day of the faker has passed. While it is true that the American public is not getting the *whole* truth from its correspondents on either side, owing to the censorship (with which I shall deal in a later article). nevertheless the average newspaper and magazine reader may rest assured that he is getting few lies. The reporters who are on the job in these days of the restrained twentieth-century war correspondents are men who must do their work as Richard Harding Davis did his.

"If you read a story by Davis," said Frederick Palmer to me one day recently, "about a little yellow dog in some out-of-the-way village, you could be sure, not only that Davis had really been in that village, but that he had really seen the yellow dog."

The Richard Harding Davis standard of truth is the standard of all the men I know in Europe who to-day are sending America its war news.

There will be another article on War Reporting in the April number. Mr. Shepherd will answer the question: Does censorship warp the news?

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THE GREAT LOST MOMENT

By LINCOLN STEFFENS

ILLUSTRATED BY WILL CRAWFORD.

"I SCREAMED FOR LIBERTY—TILL SOMEBODY LAUGHED."

MAJOR D'ALEGRO hailed me from an open carriage in the evening parade in the Calle Cinco de Mayo. His hail carried something more (or less) than a friendly greeting. There was eagerness in it; glee; and a call; like a glad but anxious signal of distress at sea. I was suspicious. But the driver stopped a few yards beyond, and the Major, on his feet, was beckoning me with the Mexican gesture to "come here." I went.

"Get in!" he cried, patting the seat beside him, and the driver nodded a smiling second to the invitation—as if the two were working together.

"Where to?" I asked; not that I cared about the destination.

"Oh, anywhere," the Major piped. "Nowhere. Follow the parade. I want to ask you a question I have been turning my head around."

"A question?" I questioned; not that I minded a question or two.

"Y-e-s-s," he said, trying, I thought, to think of one, and then a question seemed to come to his rescue.

"I've been wondering," he said, "whether a man—a live one—can't crowd into a moment—or two—as much happiness as an ordinary dub spreads out over a lifetime."

A story! The Major generalized generally from a case, a single case. His generalizations, therefore, were not always interesting, but his cases were. Even when his stories didn't illustrate his idea, they did the revolution. They—or his way of telling them—gave glimpses of Mexico in the throes. So I wanted this story, but I wondered how much it would cost. Not that I cared for the money—Mexican money was cheap. Only one doesn't like to be "worked" at any price. Pride——

"Ah, jump in," the Major urged. "We'll just sit here till you've told me."

"Told you what?" I grumbled, getting in.

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"If there ain't moments worth a lifetime; worth dying for."

"But I don't know; never thought of it. Why do you ask?"

"I was thinking," he said, "of a case—a kid—a kid about my age, maybe younger, say, nineteen or twenty. He was shot. I shot him, and as I watched him die I envied him. It seemed to me he got a thrill out of it that was more than compensation. His face was radiant; it fairly shone with——"

There was a rumpus in the street. Passing drivers were cursing the Major's driver, who was paying them back joyously in kind. We were blocking the way.

That street, like the Appian Way, is grand in story, but narrow in fact. One of the two main arteries of down-town Mexico, it is always crowded; at this, the hour of the daily parade of fashion, it is packed, like the sidewalk; packed with carriages which creep and automobiles which jerk forward, halt, jolt on again—all paced by the slowest old cab-horses; and all full of the classes that are impatient of jams. The order is to keep moving, and the Major very well knew it. He looked up, pretended to be excited, and bade the driver drive on, saying to me:

"We'll be pulled if we don't."

When I made no protest, the boy did a jig with his feet in the air. And the driver laughed with his shoulders. They had me.

By way of diversion, the Major began rattling off a monologue on the rise or fall of the parade. "All the 'decent people,' the people you call respectable, they're all in it," he said. And when I remarked sarcastically that they were mostly uniforms and girls, he laughed. "Yes," he said, "they are officers and officials of the revolutionary government, and not respectable; not decent. But the old aristocracy is gone, gone to your country; and the bottom is on top."

I looked idly over the broken-down carriages and the hopeless horses; the second-hand, raped and outraged automobiles; and at the people crowded into them: men, mostly young men, and girls, noisy, jolly, lawless.

"In the good old days," the Major said, "the finest horses and the finest carriages in the world appeared in this parade. There were not many autos then, but those that were here were all French and fine. We revolutionists, each faction in turn, took the pick of the autos and horses; had to to escape the new faction coming in. And we carried off the girls, too. But we left the streets, as you see, all lighted and brilliant and crowded with people: ladies and gentlemen darting in and out of cafés and theatres; and the peons, in their big hats, serapes—all their picturesque native costume. The big difference is that there was dignity then, while now it's only—fun? Then it was order, rotten law and order; now it's free, rotten free."

He laughed. He liked it; in that creeping, jolting, noisy, gay, licentious stream of "carriage people," the Major was in his own. It was young, like him; he, being young, didn't notice it, but that parade showed how not only the rich and respectable but the older generation had been driven out of Mexico. Almost all the faces were young, almost all the men's figures were sturdy, powerful; not fine, but energetic, and eager, and bold. Youth and reckless adventure were the signs of the hour.

"I'll tell you what a revolution is," the Major was saying. "It's a moment for a nation, a moment of happiness, of ecstasy; fatal maybe, but a joyous release, and—like the case of the kid I'm going to tell you about—worth a lifetime of dull, dead-level, respectable prosperity for—for only the 'decent people.' We indecent people—we are having our dog's day now. That's all."

The driver was turning out of the Cinco de Mayo into the Zoco (the square), when another driver yelled a yap and drove at him out of the mess of vehicles. I thought there would be a collision—and a fight, but I soon saw that the two drivers were only conversing excitedly in peon Spanish. And when the dialogue ended in a wild, joyous laugh, the crowd—the carriage folk and the mob on the sidewalk—joined in the hilarious chorus.

"That's it," said the Major, laughing, but flushed, "that's it; everybody laughs with everybody, enjoying the moment to the full. Like my kid. Only"—and he hurried on—"only my kid's moments were a hundred, a million times more intense. He had two of them. The one when he was shot was the second. He had a greater, a longer one the day before, when he shot a lot of boys himself, one by one, with a crowd looking on, and—and his girl!"

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The Major was watching me to see my interest rise, but I was watching him to see his price go up—if I displayed too much interest. And, you understand, his price for a story depended not at all upon its value, but solely upon his personal needs of the moment. If he wanted only a cigarette, that was the price; but if he happened to "have to have" a thousand *pesos*, why—that's what the story might cost you. I wanted this story, but what did the Major want?

"Major," I said, as we turned with the parade up San Francisco, "let's drive up to the club, where you can tell me your story undisturbed."

"No, no," he said earnestly, "I can't; I can't get out of this carriage."

"Why not?"

"Well," he said, snuggling up to me, "I might as well tell you—honest, I can't leave this rotten old hulk because that reactionary old blank of a pirate up there on the bridge—he won't let us."

Part of this, the descriptive part, was in Spanish, and obviously meant for the driver, who obviously heard it. He didn't move a muscle, but I could see by the expression of his back that he got it, and that he expected more. Which he got.

"The revolution has spoiled the lower classes," the Major said, mixing Spanish and English. "They think they have some rights. It's our fault. We—the decent people who have fought their fights for them, led them to victory or death—we have talked about the rights of the people. And we've convinced them. That's more than we've done for ourselves. I doubt if the people have any rights. They have duties. Their chief duty is to work, and their second is to live. They think living is a right, but it isn't. It's only a duty, secondary to and dependent upon the fact that if they don't live they can't work. And so, they don't have to live well. They're all the time wanting money, more money. Why? If they had more than barely enough to keep them alive they'd blow it in on necessities: food, drink, shelter, and clothing. They wouldn't save it up for pleasure the way I do."

"IT WAS IN PUEBLA," THE MAJOR BEGAN. "THE FEDERALS HAD THE TOWN."

The driver moved a muscle somewhere, and the expression of his back changed. So the Major changed his tone. That's all, only his tone; he put more playfulness into what he continued to say.

"I've told this driver all this," he said, "but he and his class, having rights, have lost all reason. He wants money. He demands that I pay him before I get out of

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his carriage. He knows I haven't a cent, and that I may have to sleep here, he and I and the horse together. He doesn't care. He has seen me looking for a sucker, trying to beg or borrow money. That's what I hired him for: to drive me around on a begging-tour. I wanted about fifty *pesos*, but——

"Oh," the Major said, clutching me, "I have cut that down. All I ask now is liberty: to be let out of this old vehicle before it breaks down. And he—that robber up there that hasn't the politeness not to listen to our conversation—he saw me tackle one club after another: English, American, German. Why, he saw me approach even Mexicans, friends who knew me of old! In vain. He's no sport, this driver. Look at his ugly back! See that shrug? See how he lammed his horse then? He holds me a prisoner for his bandit ransom."

"Well, but," I interrupted, "I thought you usually jumped out and skipped in a crowd somewhere."

"I do, usually," the Major said, "but this robber up there is on to that. Says I did it to him once before. I don't remember it. I try to remember my drivers and never take the same one twice, for even if I don't rob them, they rob me. Drivers are all robbers, all of 'em, in all countries. I wonder why?"

And still I couldn't see why the Major didn't drive up to some hotel or bar, get out, go in and—not come back.

"You can't?" the Major said, surprised. "Then you don't see what that driver is sitting on."

I looked. "His overcoat?" I said.

"His! *His* overcoat! No, señor," the Major exclaimed indignantly. "That is *my* overcoat he's sitting on. He picked it up off my seat when I was out once working for money for him, and he laid it there on his seat. And I—I am dressed, as you see, only in this Palm Beach suit! At night! In the wintertime! It's dangerous. He knows that. Look at him, look at his class—they're all wrapped in their serapes up over their noses to their very eyes, while he sits on my overcoat, my comfort, my life."

So that was the price for the story. Cheap! I stood up, spoke to the driver, and put my hand on the coat. He looked around, smiled, touched his hat, and rose. I took the coat, handed it to the Major, who seized it, kissed it, and put it on and laughed. And the driver's back laughed or—well, anyhow, when the Major ordered him peremptorily to drive up the Grand Paseo de la Reforma, the driver's back seemed to me to smile.

"IT WAS in Puebla," the Major began, lying back warmly in his overcoat. "The Federals had the town. We took it. They held out as long as their ammunition did, but one night we charged and they ran. Making sure they were gone for good, we left a small guard, and withdrew till morning—you know—to make a triumphal march in by daylight with the people to see us."

He was recalling the sight. "It's great to take a city," he said, "by force of arms. It's really yours—the soldiers'. As you march in you don't look at the girls and the shops the way you do when you're a mere civilian. Even a tourist can't have anything he sees; not for nothing. A soldier, or, anyhow, an officer, can. You mark down a shop that has something you want: a pair of shoes, a saddle, a diamond pin—anything; afterward you rush back to the place and you get it. If it's much, you bring your squad——"

The Major squirmed deeper into his coat. "I," he said, "I was more interested in the girls. There were some beauties in Puebla. It's a beautiful, rich, old city, down off the hill from Mexico City, nearer the soft, warm, tropical coast; and the women—I picked a girl, the first I saw, and——

"That's the trouble when you take a town after a long campaign, you pick the first pretty girl you see, forgetting you may see a prettier one farther up the street. And that's what I did. After I'd signaled to the first girl to stay where she was till I came back, I saw a beaut, and she also saw me, and signaled she'd wait. However, I let the first wait; I told another fellow about her; but I came back and got the second. She was there.

"There was a hubbub, of course. All the other fellows had rushed back, some for girls, some for shops; but I'm quick. I was almost as quick as the Commandante, and he had an automobile. He and I, he with his girl and I with mine, we met at the entrance of the leading hotel.

" 'Major d'Alegro,' he says, and I gave him the bunk salute. 'Major,' he says, 'among the prisoners taken are sixteen

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young cadet officers from Chapultepec. They did not surrender. They fought till we overwhelmed them, tied 'em up, threw them bodily into the jail. I want you to take them out to-morrow morning and shoot them. You may use one of your companies.'

"Car-r-r—!" the Major exclaimed. "I was mad. It meant getting up at daybreak the next day—the day after taking a city! And besides, I hate to shoot people, especially kids like that, all full of life and vice and —bunk. Oh, I saluted, of course; said I'd do it; and the Commandante, sure of his sleep, went on into the dining-room with his girl on his arm. But I—I stood there with mine—flabbergasted.

"Just then—" he was going on.

But just then a driver—the same, I thought, that had nearly charged us back on the square—drove by without "a fare," and gesticulated to our driver. Our driver made an answering gesture; he hugged himself, at which the other threw up his hands exulting. The Major saw it, and laughed.

"What's up, Major?" I asked.

"I don't know," he said.

"But you understood it; you laughed," I insisted. "And," I pointed, "the driver's back is grinning."

"I don't know," he said in mixed Spanish and English. "I can't imagine what that bandit is tickled over, but I—I laughed because I was thinking how absolutely he trusted you, a Gringo, whom he is supposed to hate, despise, and distrust, when he wouldn't trust me, a Mexican, an officer and a gentleman. After refusing to lend me my overcoat, he gave it to you. I think he thinks you will pay his bill for my carriage hire."

It was odd to see how plainly the driver's back hung upon my answer.

"But I will pay it," I said, and the Major (to interpret) repeated in Spanish: "You will pay it! Why?" And, nudging me, he said: "Not necessary; not at all; not now; now that I've got my coat."

Again the driver leaned back to catch my reply; but the Major, to stop me, asked:

"Where was I in the story? Oh, yes. Just as the Commandante left me, flabbergasted with the order for the execution, up came a young captain of my regiment, Captain Fernandez, a nice boy, with his girl. I knew him well, so I'd heard of his girl. He had told us all about her. He lived in Puebla, and his girl was his really-and-truly girl. And my! but she did look happy to have her soldier-hero-lover back from the wars. Bunk. I halted him the way the Commandante did me; right there at the entrance to the hotel.

" 'Captain,' I says—and he saluted—'Captain Fernandez, among the prisoners are sixteen officers, cadets from the Military Academy at Chapultepec. They fought harder than is called for by the articles of war. I want you to take them out and shoot them to-morrow morning. Use your own company.

" 'What's that?' he said, flushing up, excited. I thought he was shocked, like I was at having to get up so early or having to kill those kids. I repeated the instructions.

" 'I!' he squeaked. 'I am to—shoot them—When did you say? Where? How?'

"Looking back at it," the Major explained to me, "I can see that I got him wrong. I mistook his emotion. He wasn't shocked; he was glad. He wasn't balking. He didn't really want to know when and where and how. He was forming his plan right then; and he could hardly believe in his luck. He, with his girl on his arm, was getting an important order, and he, with his girl by to see, was to do a big thing, dramatic, terrible. But I was in a hurry then. I was hungry, and I had my girl. I was thinking only of getting rid of the job and of the Captain. So I lost—I threw away my temper.

" 'Yes, you,' I said, sarcastically; 'you are to take out your company and execute those sixteen prisoners.'

" 'But when?' he seemed to gasp. 'Where? How?'

"That was too much. I went up in the air. I mimicked the idiot. 'When? Where? How?' I says. And—now I don't know whether he was playing me for the permission he wanted: to do the thing his way; but he certainly got it. 'Do it any way you like!' I shouted. 'Do it when and wherever you —— please! Only—do it! That's all. Do it.'

"And I left him gibbering there: 'Any way I please! Anywhere!'

"I ought to have noticed that he was up to something, that he had that idea; but—well, I didn't. I went off in a huff and a hurry into the dining-room, and——"

We had arrived at the main entrance to the Park of Chapultepec. There were other carriages waiting there, and the drivers of

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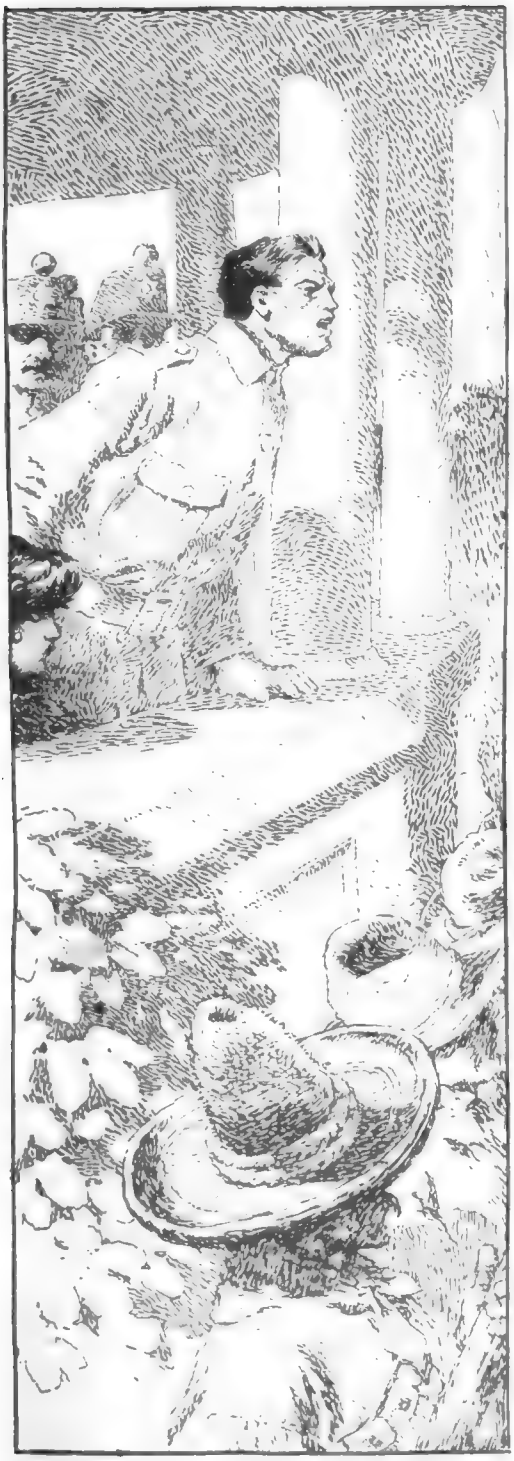

"BROTHERS," HE SAID, "FOR WE ARE BROTHERS. AND WE ARE PATRIOTS, TRUE AND BRAVE."

them, observing us, signaled some inquiry to our driver. And our driver lifted his hands in that perfect Latin expression of uncertainty.

The Major laughed, explosively, and indicating the hunched-up back of our driver, said in mixed Spanish-English: "You see? The bandit no is so *securo* now."

"Not sure of what?" I asked.

"Not sure that I've got a sucker."

"So that's what all those jehus have been asking, eh?" I said.

"Sure," said the Major. "You see, they're all pretty well on to me, and I guess they've been telling one another about me. Anyhow, this afternoon when I set out with this one, the others guyed him for a sucker, you know—by their sign-language. But he signaled back that he 'knew, but wait.' He had a plan (like the kid Captain Fernandez), and the next thing I noticed was, he was showing the members of his union the hem of my overcoat. And then—well, you saw the rest: how, when they saw you in here with me, they wanted to know if you were —one; and how he answered, first, that you were, and then, just now—since he heard me tell you that, having my coat, it wasn't necessary to pay—now he's saying he isn't so sure. And I'm boss again.

"Driver," he commanded loftily, sharply, "make the shortest turn through the park, close up under Chapultepec, and then —back down-town to the Gringos' club."

Hesitating only a second, the driver obeyed.

"We've got him guessing," said the Major. "Which is right. It makes the evening interesting to him, too, and I think Labor has a right to some share in the doubts, risks, adventures, pleasures, and responsibilities of life."

Slowly we rode into the deep shadows of the centuries-old trees around the castle, till up in the light of the moon the Major could point to the Mexican West Point, the military academy, which is a part of, almost an annex to, the palace of Chapultepec.

"That's where those boys came from that we shot at Puebla," the Major said; "they're famous fighters, the cadets are; always have been. They held Chapultepec against your General Scott; made you Gringos fight so long and hard that Scott thought there was an army in there. And, then, up that road to the top, at the gate

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you see half lighted by the moon—there's where Scott came upon the dead boy sentry, and, seeing he was a kid, looked up inquiringly at his chief of staff, who had taken the place and been through it.

" 'They're all like that,' the officer reported.

" 'What!' said the General, 'all children?'

" 'Yes,' the officer answered, 'boys—just a handful of cadets.'

"And Scott stooped, lifted the dead boy, and kissed him.

"Anyhow," the Major said, "that's the story the Mexicans tell, and that's like the cadets here and at the Naval School at Vera Cruz, which your warships had to fill full of holes to—to silence. It's the bunk of those schools that kids, too, can fight or, at any rate, die like heroes. And they can. As I saw at Puebla."

We had come around the castle hill, out of the moon-shade of the trees, and were starting back down the beautifully planned, not half done, grand boulevard. The Major went on with his story.

"I was called the next morning, at about eleven o'clock," he said. "It was a shock. I was dead asleep when the pounding began on my door. I thought the Federals were back, but I leaped to open, and a crowd —yes, a mob came in: officers, soldiers, civilians, cops, all shouting at me to 'Come! Come quick'— 'He's shooting 'em in th' square'— 'Crowd'— 'Riot'— 'A band'— 'Speeches.'

"Such things I heard, and they dazed me, but I understood enough: that I had to get up and go somewhere. I jumped into my uniform and tore after the bunch down through the street to the square. That was a solid mass of people, and my staring eyes saw the Captain way off up on the band-stand, just ending a speech. I saw him sign to the band, and I heard a patriotic air——

"I began to get it all. I butted into that mob. It resisted. Each bunch would close up on me, look round angrily, and—then slowly, very slowly open. They saw I had authority. But it was slow work at that. The band stopped playing as I got to the inside edge, and what I saw stopped me: the Captain's face.

"It was inspired. It was as light as that moon up there; and as sure, too. When the music ceased, he indicated one of the condemned cadets who stood there in a row. The one he called advanced, saluted, and backward marched to the line—the line of dead. Yes, the dead. For just there where this one stopped and stood, there lay, in a perfect row, seven other cadets; a perfect row, face downward, dead. Back of them the space was clear, barely clear, and— It was great; all wrong, dangerous; a stray bullet—but it was great. Even the crowd was great.

"And greatest of all was the Captain in command. For when the new cadet was on the line where he was to die, the Captain made a speech; he addressed that cadet.

" 'Lieutenant,' he said, stern and military. Then he changed the tone, the expression of his face, and the word. 'Brother,' he said, 'for we are brothers. We are Mexicans. And we are patriots, true and brave. You are condemned to die, I to kill you, and I shall do my duty as you will do yours. Not in hate. I feel no enmity toward you, and you feel none to me. No. You are a gentleman and an officer, and, being a Mexican, a hero. You have been fighting for what you think was right; and I —we of the revolution, we think you have been fighting for the wrong: to defend a rotten, treasonable tyranny that was selling out to foreigners for bribes the mines and the lands, the riches and the people of Mexico. And so for Mexico; not out of hate, but out of love, love for our country, I must give the command, bravely, and you, as bravely, must die, as I would die for the good, for the glory of Mexico.'

"That's what he said," the Major said, "almost exactly; and do you know, tears came to his eyes, and not in pity. No. I was appalled. They were tears of joy; ecstasy—yes, and conceit—vanity. For I saw him turn and look—not at the firing-squad—he spoke to the squad; ordered 'em be 'ready,' but he—looked, first at his girl, who was on the band-stand to his right; and second, he looked out at the crowd. And the crowd looked back at him, and so did the girl, and he—he folded his arms, swelled up and—and like the cadet.

"Yes, sir, during the speech the cadet stood with arms folded, free, not tied and not blindfolded; and at the end he dropped his arms, looked down once more to see that his heels were on the line of the dead ones, then he swelled up, as grand as the Captain. At 'ready,' he leaned a bit forward against the impact of the bullets, and at 'fire,' slowly,

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very slowly, lost his balance and fell straight forward—in line.

"Do you get it?" the Major demanded, turning upon me. "How wonderful it was? And how they all saw it was great, and enjoyed it? All. Not only the kid Captain, and the kid girl, but the kid cadets, too, those that died and those that were waiting their turn to die. And the mob, of course, which is always a kid. There were eight of those cadets laid out there in line now. He was shooting them so that they fell in line, and they were helping him, helping him to keep that line dressed, dead!"

The Major, sitting there in the moonlight, seemed to be lost for a moment in his recollection of the scene; in admiration; in—envious wonder at this children's imitation of the grown-ups' game of heroic killing and dying.

"I hated to butt in," he said at last. "I was ashamed to. The Captain hadn't seen me yet, and I let him call the 'next.' I let the next kid march up, proud and brave, salute, and backward march to where he picked out, precisely, the line for his heels to stand on, right beside the dead row so that, as he leaned to the volley, he would fall in line, in that dressed line of dead. Can you beat it?

"But, gee!" the Major exclaimed, "I had to butt in. There'd be a scandal, a row, an inquiry and—some more shooting. They might shoot me for this; you never can tell. And, besides, it was great to step forward into the limelight, as I did, just as the Captain was about to start the band; it was great to raise your right hand, call 'Halt!' and then feel the movement of the crowd, hear the stir, and wait—wait for everybody to get your focus and then, in the dead silence, hear your own clear voice:

" 'Captain, what does this mean?' I says.

"He was out of it, now; I was it," the Major purred. "I folded *my* arms, and let him explain. And he rattled off something about: 'You said I should—you said I was to shoot them—you said any way I pleased.

" 'You—you,' he kept saying, and I guess I swelled up; it seemed to me I did. But I was hard. 'And how,' I says sternly, 'how did you please to do it?' And he told me. He came down off the band-stand to tell me.

"He had only meant to have his girl see him shoot the cadets. That's why he put off the execution till nine o'clock, when she'd be up. He ordered the band the night before, only to surprise her, but when they marched—first himself, then the band, then the condemned prisoners, and then the firing-squad, and last, the empty carriage—up past his girl's house, why, a crowd collected and followed. She was to be at her window, and she was. After the procession passed, she was to come down and, escorted by a comrade-at-arms, step into the carriage, and—that's the way it was.

"But, you see," the Major said, "the band and—all, it attracted more and more crowds, till the kid in command became inflated. He liked it. It was his day, his chance, his moment. It grew. He changed the order; he gave up the plan to go to the regular place of execution, and directed the march to the square. There, the wonder was such that he felt called upon to explain. He made a speech. I hear it was a great speech. And it must have been. He had his girl just back of and to his right, on the stand; the band in its place; the firing-squad, his own whole company on the ground right under him; and the condemned on line to the right; a little firing alley laid out and cleared; and all around, all over the square, on the verandas, on the roofs, in the windows—the crowd. Gee! It must have been a great speech! Anybody—you—even I——

"But, no," the Major darkened, "I couldn't make such a speech even under those circumstances. I tried it, the next day—you see, he gave 'em bunk, the glory bunk: patriotism and the treason of Diaz; the foreign foes, American and European, who came over here and shot us full of bribes; the noble history of Mexico, our traditions, our destiny. And so he came down to the sixteen cadets, who, Federals though they were, were Mexicans and heroes just the same. As they were to prove.

" 'For,' he proclaimed, 'they have agreed, one by one, to stand up and, one by one, be shot, to show how Mexicans should and would die for their country, right or wrong.'

"It took. The crowd wept, and so did the band; and the Captain himself. It took so great that the Captain said he decided to make a separate speech to each cadet; who heard it and then went and died like he'd promised. And everybody saw it; saw it, and felt it and loved it—as I did when I got there.

"I tell you," the Major said, "everybody there was having the time of his young life.

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And as for th' Captain—Gee! Why, it seemed to me, it seems to me now, that I'd be glad to be shot th' next day to have th' chance he had and to take it the way he did. But I would never have thought of it. And he did. So it was his show. I—well, I admit, I was some glad to bust it up. It made me th' villain and not the hero, but—I got something out of th' part. And, also, I was really scared. I ordered him under arrest. I sent the band, muttering, home. And I defied the mob.

"That was worth while. They wanted to throw me out, so I leaped upon the bandstand, ordered the soldiers to be ready, and said I'd clear the square if the mob didn't. And, inspired as I was by th' scene I'd seen, I'd 'a' done it. But the crowd tumbled and moved off. And I picked up the dead eight; lined up the live ones and marched 'em all out to th' regular place and shot them regular.

"That was hard. They kicked. Yes, those cadets were mad all through. They preferred the Captain's way. They jeered at me, insulted me; they made me mad. I told 'em this execution wasn't fixed up for their benefit. They were a pack of traitors and had to die like dogs out in th' suburbs. And they did—with nobody looking but me and the soldiers—in one volley."

The Major glanced at me. "I didn't mean that," he said. "I knew how they felt, and I'd have felt the same way about it; but, you see, I had been cast as the villain, and you play the part you get, somehow. But I knew I was the dog, yellow and mean and cowardly. Yes, cowardly. Wasn't I just chock full of fear that I'd get a call-down? And I did. But," he chuckled, "not anything like what th' kid Captain got.

"You see," the Major explained, "the Commandante was scared, too. The story spread, of course, and the 'decent people' grabbed it, the way they always do a scandal, glad of something bad to be good and indignant about. So the Commandante wanted to make th' first report. He made me write it out and wire it to General Obregon, who had gone on to Vera Cruz. And I guess Obregon was scared, too, for he wired back, quick, to 'give Captain Fernandez a dose of his own medicine: shoot him in the square exactly as he shot those cadets.' "

The Major did another jig with his feet in the air. "It was my chance," he said. "I grabbed it. I says to the Commandante, 'Very well, sir,' I says, putting on the military bunk, 'I'll attend to it.' And he let me. He went off to telephone to his girl, I guess, and left me to do it. And I did it.

"Well," the Major said, less cheerily, "I did it as well as I could. I got out the same band, the same company, and the kid. And he helped me; or pretended to. Anyhow, we planned it together, and I trusted him. And we started it right. We marched, me first, the band second, the kid third, and the company fourth, past his girl's house; and mine. Yes, mine, too. And we had two carriages for them. (His girl wouldn't ride with mine.) It was a sight, and with the band playing we got the crowd, a bigger crowd even than the day before, because lots of people had missed it then and I had tipped the kickers about to-day. Oh, it was immense! I guess the whole town was there; I certainly waited long enough for them to get there. The kid asked me to.

"It must have been near noon when I opened up the show. I, I say, because I was in command all right; and I enjoyed it all right. But so did the kid. I watched him, and he was playing for the center of the stage. I was on to him, some. I had him down on the ground, where the cadets were the day before. I was on the bandstand. And yet from the very start it was nip and tuck between us, who was It.

"His girl helped him. She cried. I had her on the stand near me, but when the band played its first piece she leaped down to him and he—the son of a gun, he clasped her in his arms. It was great. He knew. He held her, dried her tears, comforted her, and then, looking up bravely at me and out over the crowd, he gently put her aside. Fine! He was an artist all right; but he was really inspired. His face was a sight. It was all lit up. It put me in the shade, and I felt dark.

"Not that I wasn't moved. I was, sure. That was the trouble. I was moved—by him, like everybody else; even the band, I guess. Anyhow, just as everybody was ready to cry, that damn band sobbed off the saddest tune I ever heard, and—that broke the dykes. Everybody broke down. The crowd was a flood of tears. I thought we'd drown in it.

"Even the kid wept, and I—but the kid's tears were tears of bliss, of triumph, while mine were tears of sorrow, sad and bitter.

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For I was getting shoved off into the second part again, the villain's. I fought for first place. I stepped on that music; I stopped the band and had 'em hit up a patriotic air. That worked. We all felt better, more enthusiastic, but the kid got it first. He knew what to do then. He asked me to let him make his speech. But I tumbled.

" 'After me,' I says.

"If it was a chance for him, it was a chance for me, and I needed a chance. And I tried to take it. I may not be great at thinking up things like the kid, but I did think that, once I saw a good thing, I could copy. So I laid it all out the way he did the day before. I put his girl back on my right, and a little back of my girl. The squad was right under me in front of the stand. All set; I ordered the kid out to the dead line. That was a mistake. He obeyed. He obeyed in style. He marched up in front of me, halted, saluted, and backward marched to the place, the identical line where the cadets stood, and he heeled it precisely the way they did, and then, his arms folded, he stood fast, ready for my speech."

The Major frowned. "I oughtn't to have moved him," he grumbled. "It made him the center of the scene again. I saw it, but too late. They'd watch him here, they wouldn't see me deliver my speech. But I couldn't think of any way out of it, so I spoke. And—and then he spoke."

"But, wait, Major," I interrupted. "What did you say in your speech?"

The Major kicked nervously the seat in front of us. "I hate to tell you," he said. "It was a fall-down. Makes me sick. I meant to give 'em the bunk, honest I did; and I didn't. I told 'em what I really thought. I was honest. I don't want to be honest. You know that. You know my ambition is to be a grafter, a big one. Oh, I know, I'm only a little one, now—as you say, a petty grafter, a beggar; but can't a little grafter grow up into a big one? Or can only honest men, the decent people, become big grafters? I don't know. I'm all mixed up, the way I was that day.

"I meant to give that crowd, that beautiful crowd, the my-country dope, and the glory and the honor and—you know. But I didn't. I can't understand why I didn't. I thought when you got inspired by a scene like that, all you had to do was to open your mouth and the right stuff would come of itself. And I started it right.

"THEY POINTED THE WHOLE ROW OF RIFLES AT HIM, AND HE LEANED THE LEAST BIT FORWARD."

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" 'Mexicans,' I says, and I waited for the effect. 'Fellow-countrymen,' I says, and I was off, 'we are at the height of a revolution, of a terrible but a glorious revolution for land and liberty.' That's what knocked me: the slogan of the revolution. The moment I says 'land,' I thought honest. In the excitement, the truth came out, and I thought —and so I said that I didn't care for land myself. I wished I did. I wanted to be with them in all their demands, but I had been told, I said, that the land decree fixed it so you couldn't hold land without working it somehow, and I didn't want to work, I says. If I could just hold it and rent it out for others to work, why, I'd be with them for land.

"I saw," the Major said softly to me, "I felt that I was off wrong, and I wanted to get back right. 'I mean,' I says, 'that I'm not a patriot like you people. I'm an officer, a leader, and I'm like the rest of your leaders—I'm not really for you. I'm for myself and the graft. We all are. Captain Fernandez there is. And I want to tell you, the people here, that you hadn't ought to trust leaders; you ought to go and fight for and get and keep what you want for yourselves. Be your own leaders or, better, don't have any. They'll all throw you down.'

"It was fierce," the Major told me. "The crowd was stunned, and I was only making it worse and worse. So I stopped, started again, stumbled, and then I remembered, all at once I remembered that I really was for half of what they wanted. I was for liberty, so I said so. I said it. I was for liberty: I shouted it; I yelled—yes, when I got no effect, I screamed it; I just stood there and screamed for liberty till—till somebody laughed, and I—I quit."

The Major glanced up deprecatingly. "I remembered the band," he said very meekly. "That had helped me out before, and I flagged 'em an S.O.S.; but the dogs; the traitors! they hit up a jig, and—I didn't care. I was lost. I saw what I was in for —that villain's part. And the kid saw it, too. I saw him see it. I saw he was laying for his hero part, and I—I came near giving the order to shoot. I was awfully tempted to put him out before he could speak. But I couldn't. I'd promised him; I'd given him my word that I'd let him make his spiel, and so, when the band finally shut up, I addressed him as—as nobly as I could.

" 'Captain Fernandez,' I says, 'you are condemned to be shot. Have you anything to say, sir, before your sentence is carried out?' "

The Major was silent a moment, thoughtful, sad.

"Go on," I said.

"I'd rather not tell you what the kid said," he pleaded. "He took advantage of me. It was great, his speech. I think it was the greatest speech I ever heard. It was bunk, of course. He laid on the patriotism all right. No honest business for him; not much, but—but bunk sounds great sometimes. And he began it all so quietly.

" 'Major d'Alegro,' he says, almost whispering it, and so kind; and then, 'Friends, countrymen, comrades, Mexicans,' and, his voice rising gradually, he rose with it, and he carried the crowd through history up to—to poetry and prophecy. He foresaw the future; he made me, he made us all see it: the glorious, victorious future. Then he closed. He dropped his voice for his peroration, which took a fall out of me, but it almost won me, too. He said they mustn't take too seriously what I said against leaders. No. I was excited; not myself. I was in a hard position, and they must allow for it and not too hastily judge me. The people must have, and they must believe in and trust leaders, like him and me (he included me): leaders who were willing, like him and me, to die, even to kill one another, for the people's sake.

"And then he paused, and then, very gravely, very bravely, he spoke again. 'Sir,' he said, 'I am ready. Shoot.'

"He had me," the Major said, "and he had the crowd. I could see the waves of feeling roll over that sea of faces, all turned to him, to his face which shone out from among them all, transported. If ever a live man was ready to pass on to eternal bliss without any shock at the change, that kid Captain was. He was——

" 'Beautiful,' some one said out loud. I think," the Major said—"I thought it was my girl. She denied it afterward, but I looked round, when I heard it, quick, to see, and his girl was a geyser of tears. She couldn't have said it. She couldn't speak. And my girl, she was in tears, but her eyes were principally two blazes of indignation. She looked at me, as if——

"Oh, I got it all right. I was the villain,

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and he was the hero—in my piece. I mean that I felt myself that I was; not only my girl and not only everybody else, but—me, too. For he *was* beautiful. I'd have given half my life to be in his place and have him where he had me—I standing there, dark and cruel, and he shining like the sun, like a young sun—in that crowd, with all those girls——

"I ought to have thought of the band again. That's what it was there for. He would have thought of it. But I didn't. I gave the order, 'Ready,' and the firing-squad obeyed as if it were inspired. They pointed the whole row of rifles at him, and he, shining brighter and brighter, dropped his arms, soldier-like, baring his breast, and leaned the least bit forward. The whole crowd leaned forward with him. I did myself.

" 'Fire,' I commanded; I had to. And he—say, honest, it looked to me as if his soul, all ready to fly, leaped away and let his body drop where he had meant to have it fall—exactly straight like those cadets."

THE driver had landed us long since at the club and, without turning around, was waiting patiently for the story to be finished.

Across the street, another carriage—the one that had crossed our path twice before, came and stood and waited, too.

"Well," said the Major at last, "here you are."

"Come in," I invited, and he got out with me.

The driver turned to me.

"How much?" I asked.

"Fifty *pesos!*" he said.

"Fifty *pesos!*" I exclaimed. "How do you make that out?"

He smiled. "Five hours to-day," he reckoned, "fifteen *pesos*. Five hours the last time: fifteen; thirty. And—" pointing to the driver across the street—"twenty for my friend over there."

"Didn't I tell you all drivers were robbers?" the Major said gleefully. "I wouldn't stand for it. *I* wouldn't. But you——"

"But I?" I prompted.

"Oh, you," he said, "you've got to. In the first place, you're a Gringo; in the second, you're one—you know; and in the third, the robber trusted you." And the Major lifted the hem of his overcoat.

I handed the driver his fifty and a good tip, and he saluted me. But he rose and he bowed to the Major, who lifted his hat to him and said:

"Good night, brother."

I HANDED THE DRIVER HIS FIFTY AND A GOOD TIP.

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·H·S·V·U·S·

THE young Americans who present arms to you above are the High-School Cadets of Onalaska, Wisconsin. The President of their Board of Education tells us why in the letter below. Since it came to us many other American boys have joined in the salute of allegiance to the Wyoming movement, and in the same spirit—the spirit that moves all those who love the thought of a stronger and more loyal America.

DEAR EVERYBODY'S:

It feels good, after twenty years of work with boys along the lines you advocate in your recent magazine articles, to have company. Captain Steever, the Onalaska Cadets salute you, and are with you to a man; and to the Editor of EVERYBODY'S we present arms and will stand at attention for more suggestion and help. It does feel good to be in such company.

What are we going to do about it? *We did!* We adopted the principles of the Wyoming idea at our school-board meeting March 6, 1916; our first meeting as reorganized cadets was March 11th; another enthusiastic meeting March 18th and 25th, and on April 1st we took our first tour into the hills. At our last board meeting, on December 4th, we unanimously agreed to affiliate with the H. S. V. U. S.

We are building bird-houses, cleaning up our little city, planting shrubbery and flowers—doing everything we can for a better home, a better town, better citizens. This has been our idea and aim for years, and now, with the help of Steever and EVERYBODY'S, and others, we are beginning to see our hopes take national shape.

Onalaska, Wisconsin, is a quiet, clean little city nestling along the banks of the Black River, overlooking the city of La Crosse and the Mississippi, a "city" of twelve hundred souls—not mere human beings, but souls interested in each other's well-being, in the welfare of our state and nation—a friendly "city" and hospitable, with one policeman, and no arrests; its latchstring always out for the weary traveler of the friendly road, who is given a bed, a meal, and sent on his way among the birds, tall elms, and sturdy oaks, a better man. Its citizens, the great majority of them foreign-born, are Americans first and last, interested not only locally but nationally.

Hyphens—perhaps! We do love our mother country, as we would love the memory of our dead parents; but when the call comes to support the Stars and Stripes, we will come with cheers, and it will be dangerous to call us anything but Americans. All of us, even the little tots and the girls—yes, the young ladies of our school—are learning first aid, camp cooking, and to shoot, all alive with patriotic enthusiasm to be ready and do our part to preserve peace, to defend our flag, to make America the standard-bearer for righteousness, to defend the principle of America for Americans, a country of the people, for the people, and by the people. We are proud of being in line with other great states and cities—and EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE—for preparedness. Surely you are doing a great good work in awakening national pride and enthusiam. Yours truly,

E. T. BERG.
President Board of Education.

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THINGS ARE MOVING

FROM Cheyenne we learn that three members of a legislative committee from New Jersey are spending several weeks in Wyoming making a detailed study of the Wyoming system, with view to submitting a detailed report recommending the adoption by the Legislature of New Jersey of the Steever Plan of Military Training in the high schools of that state.

High-school cadets from all over the country will be sent by their states to take part in the inauguration of President Wilson. This is the first time our schoolboys have been given a chance, in this way, to feel what it is to be an American.

HOW THEY MOVE

August 27, 1916

H. S. V. U. S.,
EVERYBODY'S:

Count on Pendleton public schools as in the game.

We have a high school of only three hundred and forty-six, but are alive, and hope to do the right thing in the right way.

Send along any suggestions as to the course of instruction at your earliest convenience.

Yours,
A. T. PARK,
Superintendent of Schools,
Pendleton, Oregon.

October 9, 1916.

Fifty-seven boys signed up for cadet work to-day in our high school.

Very truly yours,
A. T. PARK.

November 27, 1916.

We started with fifty-seven members of the high-school student body, and now have eighty members. We have solved the problem of a drill-master by the cooperation of the local recruiting officer of the United States Marines, Sergeant Young. He has met the boys, and they are his. Enthusiasm is now running high, and we expect to have over one hundred boys on the drill floor by Christmas. All people seem to think it a splendid thing for the physical upbuilding and the mental adjustment of the youth of our city.

Hoping that the movement will soon sweep the country, we are

Yours very truly,
PENDLETON CITY SCHOOLS.
By A. T. PARK,
Superintendent.

The following students have been chosen by the cadet corps of their respective high schools as representatives for the Advisory Board of the H. S. V. U. S.:

Mr. Reuel Proctor, Three Rivers, Texas.
Mr. William Dale Dutton, Dunnellon, Florida.
Mr. David Cook, Cheyenne, Wyoming.
Mr. James Chalmers, Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

We ask the other eleven high schools which have taken up the Wyoming system to elect their representatives as soon as possible in order that they may start the work of making the H. S. V. U. S. a national organization for the spread of the Wyoming idea. As soon as the present Advisory Board of student representatives is complete we shall submit to them a tentative constitution for the H. S. V. U. S. and ask them to discuss it and to choose their national officers.

If you are not thoroughly acquainted with the history and operation of the Wyoming system and the splendid results which it has accomplished, just drop a postal-card to this address:

HEADQUARTERS

HIGH-SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS OF THE UNITED STATES
EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE, *NEW YORK*

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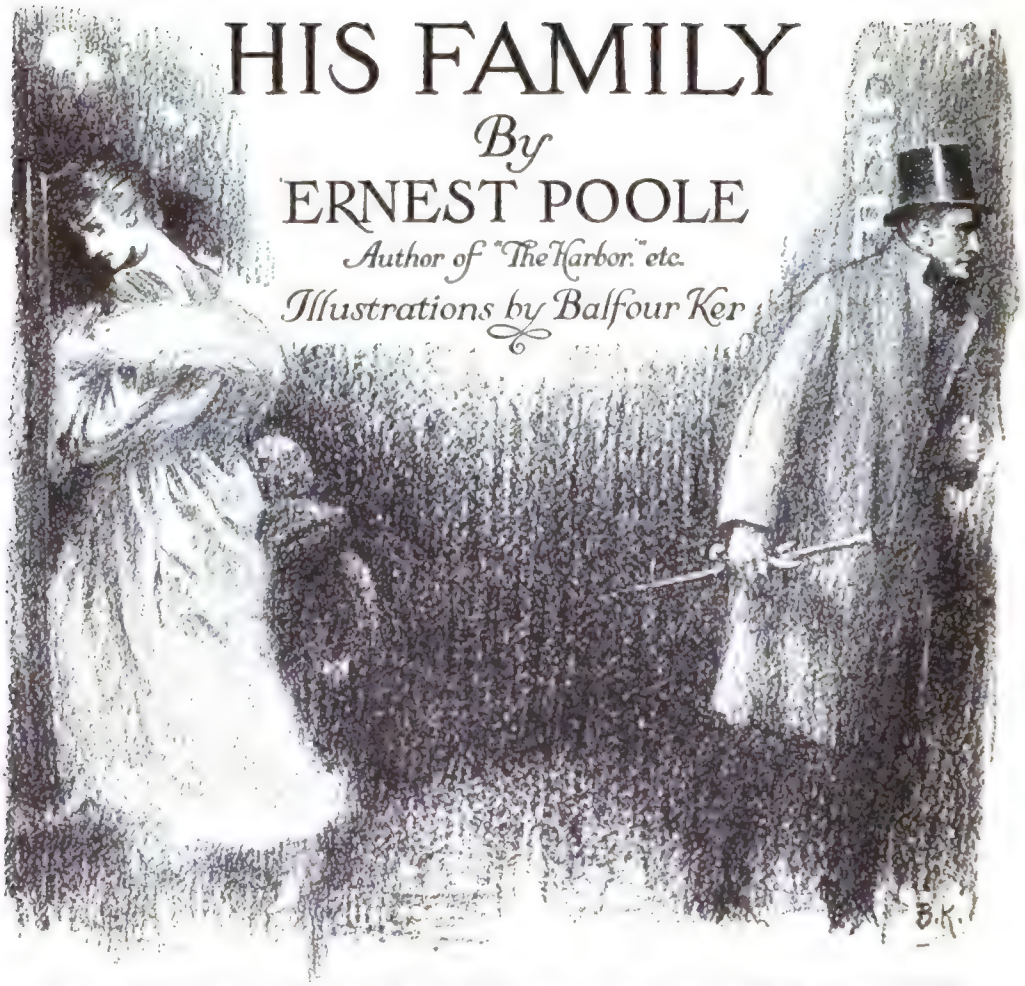
HIS FAMILY

By

ERNEST POOLE

Author of "The Harbor," etc.

Illustrations by Balfour Ker



"IT'S ENTIRELY UP TO YOU, SWEETIE. YOU CAN HAVE ANY KIND OF DIVORCE YOU LIKE."

THIS is the story of a man and his three daughters in the midst of a great modern city and its problems. Roger Gale's wife died when the children were little, and for sixteen years he has lived shut up within himself, not sharing in his daughters' interests. Now, nearly sixty, he is again awake, and eager to understand these three grown-up women of his household. His eldest daughter, Edith, is wrapped up in her family—an intensely maternal type of woman, whose devotion to her children shuts out the rest of the world. The second, Deborah, is the superintendent of a great public school, working out on modern lines a union between school and community. The youngest, Laura, a beauty, devotes her whole mind to pleasure. She marries a man as pleasure-loving, as much a speeder and a spender, as herself.

Presently Roger begins to get acquainted with "Deborah's big family"—her great school and the crowded foreign community of which it is the center. One result is that he takes into his office, and later into his home, one of Deborah's "boys"—a cripple, Johnny Geer. Near the close of school, Deborah collapses under the strain of her intense life, and Allan Baird, her physician, tells Roger her trouble is—motherhood on a new, large scale: three thousand children on her mind.

During the next year it is clear that Baird and Deborah are in love; but Deborah fears a home of her own will lessen her devotion to the big service she has undertaken for the tenement children. Baird, willing to wait, opens a clinic in connection with Deborah's school, and works with her. Toward the end of the year the Board of Education approves Deborah's experiment and even extends it. Not long after, reassured by success, she consents to marry Baird.

Then, one evening after a theatre, before

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Edith's eyes, her husband is hit by an automobile, and fatally injured. After his death, Edith learns that there is almost no money, and that after their summer in the mountains she and the children must live with Roger. On Edith's account Deborah's marriage is postponed, and when the war breaks out it is put off still further: for Deborah, at her post in the tenements, strains every nerve, devotes all her resources to help solve the terrible unemployment problem. Meantime Roger's business has been hard hit, but under Deborah's urging he keeps on, at a loss, for the sake of his employees. Home expenses have to be cut, and as this means cutting down on luxuries for Edith's children, there is constant tension between Edith and Deborah. Roger, sympathizing with each in turn, is for a long time in a constant turmoil. But eventually the situation is adjusted and he has a few weeks of peace.

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

Laura Returns to Her Father's House

IF THERE was any cloud upon this horizon, it was the thought of Laura. She had barely been at the house since Edith had come back to town. And at times, especially in the days when things had looked dark for Roger, he had caught himself reproaching this giddy-gaddy youngest child, so engrossed in that "ménage" of hers that apparently she could not spare a thought for her widowed sister. Laura on her return from abroad had brought as a gift for Edith a mourning gown from Paris, a most alluring creation—so much so, in fact, that Edith had felt it simply indecent, insulting, and had returned it to her sister with a stilted note of thanks. But Roger did not know of that.

There were so many little ways, he thought, in which Laura might have been nice to Edith. She had a gorgeous limousine in which she might so easily have come and taken her sister off on little trips uptown. But no, she kept her car all to herself. And from her small apartment, where a maid whom she had brought from Rome dressed her several times each day, that limousine rushed her noiselessly forth, gay and wild as ever, immaculate and elegant, radiant and very rich. To what places did she go? What new friends was she making? What was Laura up to?

He had not liked her manner the last time she was at the house. As he had helped her off with her cloak, a sleek, supple leopard skin that fitted her figure like a glove, he had asked: "Where's Hal this evening?"

And she had answered lightly: "Oh, don't ask *me* what he does with himself."

"You mean, I suppose," said Edith, with quiet disapproval, "that he is rushed to death this year with all this business from the war."

"Yes, it's business," Laura replied, as she deftly smoothed and patted her soft, abundant reddish hair. "And it's war, too," she added.

"What do you mean?" her father asked. He knew what she meant—war with her husband. But before Laura could answer him, Edith cut in hastily, for two of her children were present.

At dinner she turned the talk to the war in Europe. But even on that topic, Laura's remarks were disturbing. She did not consider the war all bad; it had many good points. It was clearing away a lot of old rubbish, customs, superstitions, and institutions out of date. "Musty old relics," she called them. She spoke as though repeating what some one else had told her. Laura with her chicken's mind could never have thought out all that by herself.

When asked what she meant, she was smilingly vague, with a glance at Edith's youngsters. But she threw out hints about the church and even Christianity, as though it were all falling to pieces. She spoke of a second Renaissance, "a glorious pagan era" coming. And then she exploded a bomb:

"What do you think the girls over there are going to do for husbands, Edith, with half the marriageable men either killed or hopelessly damaged? They're not going to be nuns all their lives!"

Again her sister cut her off, and the rest of the brief evening was decidedly awkward. Yes, she was changing, growing fast. And Roger did not like it. Here she was, spending money like water, absorbed in her pleasures, having no baby, apparently at loose ends with her husband; and through it all so cocksure of herself and of her outrageous views about war, and smiling about them with such an air; and in her whole manner such a tone of amused superiority. She had talked about a world for the strong, bits of gabble from Nietzsche and that sort of rot; she had spoken of a Rome reborn, the "Wings of the Eagles" heard again. That part of it she had taken, no doubt, from her new Italian friend, her husband's

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shrapnel partner. Pshaw! What was Laura up to? But that was only one evening. It had not been repeated; a month had gone by, and Roger had soon shaken it from him, for there were troubles enough at home. One daughter at a time, he thought. And as the dark clouds close above him had cleared, that other cloud too had drifted away, until it was small, just on the horizon, far away from Roger's house. What was Laura up to? He barely ever thought of that now.

But one night when he came home, content at the prospect of the evening ahead, Edith, who sat in the living-room reading aloud to her smaller boys, gave him a significant look that warned him something had happened. And turning to take off his overcoat in the hall, he almost stumbled upon a pile of hand luggage, two patent-leather bags, a hat trunk, and a sable cloak.

"Hello!" he exclaimed. "What's this? Who's here?"

"Laura," Edith answered. "She's up in Deborah's room, I think—they've been up there for over an hour."

Roger looked indignantly at his daughter. "What has happened?" he asked.

"I'm afraid I can't tell you," Edith replied. "They didn't seem to need me. They made it rather plain, in fact. Another quarrel, I presume. She came into the house like a whirlwind, asked at once for Deborah, and flew up to Deborah's room."

"Pshaw!" Roger heavily mounted the stairs. He at least did not feel like flying. A whirlwind, eh?—a nice evening ahead!

MEANWHILE in her room Deborah sat motionless, alert and vigilant, sternly holding her feelings down, while in a voice now kindly but more often full of a sharp dismay, she threw out question after question to Laura, who was walking the floor in a quick, feverish sort of way, with gestures half hysterical, her voice bursting with emotions of mingled fright and rage.

"No, this time it's divorce!" she declared, at the end of her first outburst, in which she had told in fragments of her husband's double life. "I've stood it long enough! I'm through!"

"You mean you don't care for him," Deborah said. She was fighting for time to think it all out. "You want a divorce. All right, Laura dear—but how do you think you are going to get it? The laws are rather strict in this state. They allow but one cause. Have you any proofs?"

"No, I haven't—but I don't need any proofs! He wants it as badly as I do! Wait—I'll give you his very words!" Laura's face grew white with fury. " 'It's entirely up to you, Sweetie'—the beast!—'You can have any kind of divorce you like. You can let me bring suit on the quiet and save myself from paying you alimony all my life—or you can try to fight me in court, climb up into the witness-chair in front of the reporters, and tell them all about yourself!' "

"*Your husband is to bring suit against you?*" Deborah's voice was loud and harsh. "For God's sake, Laura, what do you mean?"

"Mean? I mean that *he has proofs!* He has used a detective, the mean little cur, and he's treating me like the dirt under his feet! Just as though it were one thing for a man, and another—quite—for a woman! He even had the nerve to be mad, to get on a high horse, call me names! Turn me—turn me out on the street!" Deborah winced as though from a blow. "Oh, it was funny, funny!" Laura was almost sobbing.

"Stop, this minute!" Deborah said. "You say you've been doing—what he has?"

"Why shouldn't I? What do you know about it? Are you going to turn against me too?"

"I am—pretty nearly——"

"Oh, good God!" Laura tossed up her hands and went on with her walking.

"Quiet! Try to be clear and explain."

"Explain—to you? How can *I*? *You* don't understand—you know nothing about it—all you know about is schools! You're a nun, that's all, when it comes to this. I see it now—I didn't before—I thought you a modern woman—with your mind open to new ideas. But it isn't, it seems, when it comes to a pinch—it's shut as tight as Edith's is."

"Yes, tight!"

"Thank you very much! Then for the love of Heaven will you kindly leave me alone? I'll have a talk with father!"

"You will *not* have a talk with father——"

"I most certainly will—and he'll understand! He's a man, at least—and he led a man's life before he was married!"

"Laura!"

"*You* can't see it in him—*but I can!*"

"You'll say not a word to him, not one word! He's had enough this year as it is!"

"Has he? Then I'm sorry! If *you* were

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any help to me—instead of acting like a nun——"

"Will you stop talking like a fool?"

"I'm not! I'm speaking the truth and you know it! You know no more about love like mine than a nun of the Middle Ages! You needn't tell me about Allan Baird! You think you're in love with him, don't you? Well then, I'll tell you that you're not—that your love is the kind that can wait for years—because it's cold, it's cold, it's cold—it's all in your mind and your reason! And so I say you're no help to me now! Here—look at yourself in the glass over there! You're just plain angry—frightened!"

"Yes—I am. I'm frightened." While she strove to think clearly, to form some plan, she let her excited young sister talk rapidly on.

"I know you are! And you can't be fair! You're like nearly all American women — married or single, young or old—you're all of you scared to death about Sex—just as your Puritan mothers were! And you leave it alone — you keep it down — you never give it a chance — you're afraid! But I'm not afraid — and I'm living my life! And let me tell you I'm not alone! There are hundreds and thousands doing the same —girls and women who aren't afraid—right here in New York City to-night! It's been so abroad for years and years—in Rome and Berlin, in Paris and London—and now, thank God, it has come over here! If our husbands can do it, why can't we? And we are—we're starting—it's come with the war! You think war is hell and nothing else, don't you?—but you're wrong! It's not only killing men—it's killing a lot of hypocrisies too—it's giving a jolt to marriage! You'll see what the women will do soon enough—when there aren't enough men any longer——"

"Now suppose you stop this tirade and tell me exactly what you've done," Deborah interrupted. A simple course of action had just flashed into her mind.

"All right, I will. I'm not ashamed. I've given you this 'tirade' to show you exactly how I feel—that it's not any question of sin or guilt or any musty old rubbish like that! I know I'm right! I know just what I'm doing!"

LAURA LIFTED HER HEAD FROM THE PILLOW.

"Who's the man? That Italian?"

"Yes."

"Where is he now?"

"Right here in New York."

"Does he mean to stand by you?"

"Of course he does."

"Will he marry you, Laura?"

"Yes, he will—the minute I'm free from my beast of a husband!"

"And your husband will keep his suit quiet, if you agree not to fight him?"

"Yes."

Deborah rose abruptly. "Then will you stay right here to-night, and leave this matter to me?" she asked.

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"What do *you* mean to do?"

"See your husband."

"What for? When?"

"To-night, if I can. I want to be sure."

Laura looked for the moment nonplused. "And what of my wishes?" she inquired.

"*Your* wishes," said Deborah steadily. "You want a divorce, don't you?—so do I. And you want it quiet—and so do I. I want it so hard that I want to make sure." Deborah's tone was kinder now, and she came over close to her sister. "Look here, Laura, if I've been hard, forgive me—please—and let me help. I'm not so narrow as you think. I've been through a good deal of this before—down-town, I mean, with girls in my school. They come to me, we have long talks. Maybe I *am* a nun—as you say—but I'm one with a confessional. Not for sins," she added, as Laura looked up angrily. "Sins don't interest me very much. But troubles do. And Heaven knows that marriage is one," she said with a curious bitterness. "And when it has failed and there's no love left—as in your case—I'm for divorce. Only—" her wide, sensitive lips quivered just a little—"I'm sorry it had to come like this. But I love you, dear, and I want to help, I want to see you safely through. And while I'm doing it, if we can, I want to keep dad out of it—at least until it's settled." She paused a moment. "So if you agree, I'll go to your husband. I want to be sure, absolutely, just what we can count on. And until I come back, stay here in my room. You don't want to talk to father and Edith——"

"Most certainly not!" Laura muttered.

"Good. Then stay here until I return. I'll send you up some supper."

"I don't want any, thank you." Laura went and threw herself on the bed, while her sister finished dressing. "It's decent of you, Deborah. I wasn't fair," she added. "I'm sorry for some of the things I said."

"About me and marriage?" Deborah looked at herself in the glass in a peculiar, searching way. A slight spasm crossed her features. "I'm not sure but what you were right. At times I feel far from certain."

Laura lifted her head from the pillow, watched her sister a moment, dropped back. "Don't let this affect *you*, Deborah."

"Oh, don't worry, dearie." And Deborah moved toward the door. "My affair is just

"FATHER! DON'T TRY TO FIGHT THIS SUIT!"

mine, you see, and this won't make any difference."

But in her heart she knew it would. What an utter loathing she had to-night for all that people meant by sex! All at once she was quivering, her limbs and her whole body hot. "You say I'm cold," she was thinking. "Cold toward Allan, calm and cool, nothing but mind and reason! You say it means little to me, all that! But if I had had trouble with Allan, would I have come running home to talk? Wouldn't I have hugged it tight? And isn't that love? What do *you* know of me and the life I've led? Do you know how it feels to want to work, to be something yourself, without any man? And can't *that* be a passion? Have

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you had to live with Edith here and see what motherhood can be, what it can do to a woman? And now you come with another side, just as narrow as hers, devouring everything else in sight! And because I'm a little afraid of that, for myself and all I want to do, you say I don't know what love is! But I do! And my love's worth more than yours! It's deeper, richer, it will last! . . . Then why do I loathe it *all* to-night? But I don't, I only loathe *your* side! . . . But yours is the very heart of it all. . . . All right, then what am I going to do?"

She was going slowly down the stairs. She stopped and frowned, then went on.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

Deborah Takes a Hand

ON THE floor below she met her father, who was coming out of his room. He looked at her sharply.

"What's the trouble?"

"Laura's here," she answered. "Trouble again with her husband. Better leave her alone for the present—she's going to stay in my room for a while."

"All right," her father grunted, and they went down to dinner. There Deborah was silent, and Edith did most of the talking. Edith, quite aware of the fact that Laura was in disgrace for the moment, and that she and her ways with her children shone by the comparison, was bright and sweet and tactful. Roger glanced at her more than once, with approval and with gratitude for the effort she was making to smooth over the situation. Deborah rose before they had finished.

"Where are you off to?" Roger asked.

"Oh, there's something I have to attend to——"

"School again this evening, dear?" inquired Edith cheerfully, but her sister was already out of the room. She looked at her father with quiet concern. "I'm sorry she has to be out to-night—to-night of all nights," she murmured.

"Humph!" ejaculated her father. This *eternal* school business of Deborah's was beginning to get on his nerves. Yes, just a little on his nerves! Why couldn't she give up one evening, just one, and get Laura out of this snarl she was in? He heard her at the telephone, and presently she came back to them.

"Oh, Edith," she said, in a casual tone, "don't send any supper up to Laura. She says she doesn't want any to-night. And ask Hannah to put a cot in my room. Will you?"

"Yes, dear, I'll attend to it."

"Thanks." And again she left them. In silence, when the front door closed, Edith looked at her father. This must be rather serious, Roger thought excitedly. So Laura was to stay all night, while Deborah gallivanted off to those infernal schools of hers! He had little joy in his paper that evening. The news of the world had such a trick of suddenly receding a million miles away from a man the minute he was in trouble. And Roger was in trouble. With each slow tick of the clock in the hall he grew more certain and more disturbed. An hour passed. The clock struck nine. With a snort he tossed his paper aside.

"Well, Edith," he said glumly, "how about some chess this evening?"

In answer she gave him a quick little smile of understanding and sympathy. "All right, father dear." And she fetched the board.

But they had played only a short time when Deborah's latch-key was heard in the door. Roger gave an angry hitch to his chair. Soon she appeared in the doorway.

"May I talk to you, father?" she said.

"I suppose so." Roger scowled.

"You'll excuse us, Edith?" Deborah asked.

"Oh, assuredly, dear." And Edith rose, looking very much hurt. "Of course, if I'm not needed——"

At this her father scowled again. Why couldn't Deborah show her sister a little consideration? "What is it?" he demanded.

"Suppose we go into the study," she said. He followed her in silence.

"Well?" he asked, from his big leather chair.

Deborah had remained standing. "I've got some bad news," she began.

"What is it?" he snapped. "School burnt down?" Savagely he bit off a cigar.

"I've just had a talk with Harold."

He shot a glance of surprise and dismay. "Have, eh—what's it all about?"

"It's about a divorce," she answered.

THE lighted match dropped from Roger's hand. He snatched it up before it was out and lit his cigar, and, puffing smoke in

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a vigilant way, again he eyed his daughter.

"I've done what I could," she said painfully, "but they seem to have made up their minds."

"Then they'll unmake 'em," Roger said, and he leaned forward heavily. "They'll unmake 'em," he repeated, in a thick, unnatural tone. "I'm not a-goin' to hear to it!" In a curious manner his voice had changed. It sounded like that of a man in the mountains, where he had been born and raised. This thought flashed into Deborah's mind and her wide, resolute mouth set hard. It would be very difficult.

"I'm afraid that won't do, father dear. Whether you give your consent or not——"

"Wun't, wun't it? You wait and see if it wun't!"

Deborah came close to him. "Suppose you wait till you understand," she admonished sternly.

"All right, I'm waiting," he replied.

She felt herself trembling deep inside. She did not want him to understand, any more than she must to induce him to keep out of this affair. "To begin with," she said steadily, "you will soon see yourself, I think, that they fairly loathe the sight of each other—that there is no real marriage left."

"That's fiddlesticks!" snapped Roger. "Just modern talk and new ideas—ideas you're to blame for! Yes, you are—you put 'em in her head—you and your gabble about woman's rights!" He was angry now. He was glad he was angry. He'd just begun!

"If you want me to leave her alone," his daughter cut in sharply, "just say so! I'll leave it all to you!" And she saw him flinch a little. "What would be *your* idea?" she asked.

"My idea? She's to go straight home and make up with him!"

She hesitated. Then she said: "Suppose there's another woman."

He shot a look over his cigar. "Then he's a beast," growled Roger.

"And yet you want her to live with him?"

He scowled, he felt baffled, his mind in a whirl. And a wave of exasperation all at once swept over him. "Well, why shouldn't she?" he cried. "Other wives have done it—millions! Made a devilish good success of it, too—made new men of their husbands! Let her show him she's ready to forgive. That's only Christian, ain't it? Hard? Of course it's hard on her! But can you tell me one hard thing she has ever had to do in her life? Hasn't it been pleasure, pleasure from the word go? Can't she stand something hard? Don't we all of us have to? I do—God knows—with all of you!" And he puffed his cigar in a fury.

His daughter smiled. She saw her chance. "Father," she said, in a low, sweet voice, "you've had so *many* troubles. Why not leave this one to me? You'll only make it worse and worse. And you've been through so much this year—you've earned the right to be quiet. And that's what *they* want, both of them—they both want it quiet, without any scandal." Her father glared, for he knew about scandal; he handled it in his office each day. "Let me manage this—please," she said. And her offer tempted him. He struggled for a moment.

"No, I wun't!" he burst out in reply. "I want quiet right enough, but not at the price of her peace with her God!" That sounded foolish, he felt that it did, and he flushed and grew the angrier. "No, I wun't," he said stubbornly. "She'll go back to him if I take her myself. And what's more," he added, rising, "she's to go back to-night!"

"She is not going back to-night, my dear." And Deborah caught her father's arm. "Sit down, please——"

"I've heard enough!"

"I'm afraid you haven't," she replied.

"All right." His smile was caustic. "Then give me some more of it," he said.

"Her husband won't have her," said Deborah bluntly. "He told me so himself—to-night."

"Did, eh?—then *I'll* talk to him!"

"He thinks," she went on in a desperate tone, "that Laura has been leading—'her own little life'—as he put it to me."

"*Eh?*"

"He's bringing suit himself."

"*Oh! He is!*" cried Roger hoarsely. "Then I *will* talk to this young man!"

But she put out a restraining hand: "Father! Don't try to fight this suit!"

"You watch me!" he snarled.

Tears showed in her eyes. "Think! Oh, please! Think what you're doing! Have you ever seen a divorce-court—here, in New York? Do you know what it's like? What it *can* be like?"

"Yes," Roger panted. He did know, and the picture came vividly into his mind—a mass of eager, devouring eyes fixed on

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a girl in a witness-chair. "To-morrow I see a lawyer!" he said.

"No—you won't do that, my dear," Deborah told him sadly. "Laura's husband has got proofs."

Her father's eyes turned slowly and glared into his daughter's face.

"I've seen them myself," she added. "And Laura has admitted it, too."

Still for a moment he stared at her. Then slowly he settled back in his chair, his eyes dropped in their deep sockets, and very carefully, with a hand which was trembling visibly, he lifted his cigar to his lips. It had gone nearly out, but he drew on it hard, until it began to glow again.

"Well," he asked simply, "what shall we do?"

ALL at once Deborah turned away. To be quiet, to be matter-of-fact, to act as though nothing had happened at all—she knew that was what he wanted now, what he was silently begging her to be for his sake, for the family's sake. For he had been raised in New England. And so, when she turned back to him, her voice was flat and commonplace.

"Keep her here," she said. "Let him do what he likes. There'll be nothing noisy, he promised me that. But keep her here till it's over."

Roger smoked for a moment, and said: "There's Edith and her children."

"The children needn't know anything—and Edith only part of it."

"The less, the better," he grunted.

"Of course." She looked at him anxiously. This tractable mood of his might not last. "Why not go up and see her now—and get it all over—so you can sleep?"

Over Roger's set, heavy visage flitted a smile of grim relish at that. Sleep! Deborah was funny. Then resolutely he rose from his chair.

"You'll be careful, of course," she admonished him, and he nodded in reply.

At the door he turned back: "Where's the other chap?"

"I don't know," she answered. "Surely you don't want to see *him*——"

Her father snorted his contempt: "See him? No. Nor she neither. *She's* not to see him. Understand?"

"I wouldn't tell her that to-night."

"Look here." Roger eyed his daughter. "You've done well. I've no complaint. But don't try to manage everything."

He went out and slowly climbed the stairs. Outside the bedroom door he paused. When had he stood like this before? In a moment he remembered. That evening some two years ago, the night before Laura's wedding, when they had had that other talk. And so it had come to this, had it? Well, there was no use making a scene. Again, with a sigh of weariness, Laura's father knocked at her door.

"Come in, Deborah," she said.

"It isn't Deborah, it's I."

There was a little silence.

"Very well, father, come in, please." Her voice sounded tired and lifeless. He opened the door and found the room dark. "I'm over on the bed," she said. "I've had a headache this evening."

He came over to the bedside, and he could just see her there, a long, dark shadow upon the white. She had not taken off her clothes. He stood a moment helplessly.

"Please don't *you* talk to me and preach!" his daughter fiercely whispered. "I can't stand any more to-night!"

"I won't," he said. "I'm not here for anything now, it's too late." Again there was a pause.

"What time is it?" she asked him. But Roger did not answer that.

"Well, daughter," he said presently, "Deborah has told me everything. She has seen your husband—it's all arranged—and you're to stay here till it's over. . . . . You want to stay here, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Then it's settled," he went on. "There's only one thing—that other man. I don't know who he is, and I don't want to know. And I don't want you to know him again. You're not to see him. Understand?"

For a moment Laura was silent. "I'm going to marry him, father," she said. And standing there in the darkness Roger stiffened sharply.

"Well," he answered, after a pause, "that's your affair. You're no longer a child. I wish you were," he added.

Suddenly in the darkness Laura's hand came out clutching for his. But he had already turned to the door.

"Good night," he said, and left her.

In the hallway below he met Deborah, and to her questioning look he replied, "All right, I guess. Now I'm going to bed." He went into his room and closed the door.

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As soon as Roger was alone, he knew that this was the hardest part—to be here by himself in this intimate room, with this worn rug, these pictures, and this old mahogany bed. For he had promised Judith, his wife, to keep close to the children. What would she think of him if she knew?

Judith had been a broad-minded woman, sensible, big-hearted. But she never would have stood for this. Once, he recollected, she had helped a girl friend to divorce her husband, a drunkard who ran after chorus girls. But that had been quite different. There the wife had been innocent and had done it for her children. Laura was guilty, she hadn't a child, she was already planning to marry again. And then what?—he asked himself. "From bad to worse, very likely. A woman can't stop when she's started down-hill." His eye was caught by the picture directly before him on the wall—the one his wife had given him—two herdsmen with their cattle high up on a shoulder of a sweeping mountainside, tiny blue figures against the dawn. It had been like a symbol of their lives, always beginning clean, glorious days. What was Laura beginning?

"Well," he demanded angrily, as he began to jerk off his clothes, "what can I do about it now? Try to keep her from remarrying, eh? And suppose I succeeded, how long would it last? She wouldn't stay here, and I couldn't keep her. She'll be independent now—her looks will be her bank-account. There'd be some other chap in no time, and he might not even marry her!" He tugged ferociously at his boots. "No, let well enough alone!"

He finished undressing, opened the window, turned out the gas, and got into bed. Wearily he closed his eyes. But after a time he opened them and stared long through the window up at that beetling cliff of a building close by, with its tier upon tier of lighted apartments, a huge, garish hive of homes. Yes, the town was crowding down on him to-night, on his house and on his family. He realized now it had never stopped, and that his three grown children, each one of them a part of himself, had been struggling with it all the time. Laura—wasn't she part of himself? Hadn't he, too, had his little fling, back in his early twenties? "You will live on in our children's lives." She was a part of him gone wild. What a chance she had taken this time! The picture of that court-room, with the girl in the witness-chair and those many rows of eyes avidly fixed upon her, came back to his mind so vividly they seemed for a moment right here in the room, these eyes of the town boring into his house.

Angrily he shut out the scene. And alone there in the darkness, Roger said to his daughter all the ugly, furious things he had not said to her up-stairs—until at last he was weary of it.

"Why am I working myself all up? I've got to take this. It's my medicine."

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

Laura Sails for Naples

BUT in the days that followed, Roger's first emotions of sharp anger and disgust were complicated more and more by a feeling of bewilderment. At dinner the next evening he noticed with astonishment that Laura appeared like her natural self. "She's acting," he decided. But this explanation he soon dismissed. No, it was something deeper. She was actually unashamed, unafraid. That first display of feeling, the night of her coming to the house, had been only the scare of an hour. Within a few days she was back on her feet; and her cure for her trouble, if trouble she felt, was not less but more pleasure, as always. She went out nearly every evening now; and when she had spent what money she had, she sold a part of her jewelry to the little old Galician Jew in the shop around the corner. Yes, she was her natural self. And she was as before to her father, remote and yet so intimate and so affectionate at times. Her attitude said plainly:

"It isn't fair to you, poor dear, to expect you to understand how right I am in this affair. And considering your point of view, you're acting very nicely."

Often as she talked to him a note of good-humored forgiveness crept into his daughter's voice. And looking at her grimly out of the corner of his eye, he saw that she looked *down* on him, far, far down from heights above.

"Yes," he thought, "this is modern." Then he grew angry all at once. "No," he added, "this is wrong! You can't fool me, young woman; you know it as well as I do! You're not going to carry this off with an air—not with your father! No, by George!"

And he would grow abrupt and stern.

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But days would pass, and in spite of himself into their talks would creep that natural, friendly tone. Again he found himself friends with her—friends as though nothing had happened at all! Could it be that a woman who had so sinned could go right on as though nothing had happened? Here was Laura, serenely unconscious of guilt, and smiling into her future, dreaming still of happiness, quite plainly sure of it, in fact! With a curious dismayed relief Roger would scowl at this daughter of his—a radiant enigma in his quiet, sober house.

But Edith was not at all perplexed. When she learned from Deborah that there was soon to be a divorce, she came at once to her father. Her face was like a thunder-cloud.

"A nice example for my children!" she indignantly exclaimed.

"I'm sorry, my dear. But what can I do?"

"You can make her go back to her husband, can't you?"

"No, I can't," he flatly replied.

"Then I'd better try it myself!"

"You'll do no such thing!" he retorted. "I've gone clear to the bottom of this—and I say you're to leave her alone!"

"Very well," she answered.

And she did leave her sister alone, so severely that Laura soon avoided being home for lunch or dinner. She had taken the room that George had occupied ever since John had been turned out, and there she breakfasted late in bed, until Edith put a stop to it. They barely spoke to each other now. Laura still smiled her defiance.

Days passed. Christmas came at last, and despite Edith's glum resolution to make it a happy day for the children, the happiness soon petered out. After the tree in the morning, the day hung heavy on the house. Roger buried himself in his study. Laura had motored off into the country with a gay party of her friends. Or was that just a ruse, he wondered, and was she spending the day with her lover? Well, what if she was? Could he lock her in?

About twilight he thought he heard her return, and later from his bedroom he heard her voice and Edith's. Both voices sounded angry, but he would not interfere.

At the Christmas dinner that evening Laura did not put in an appearance, but Edith sat stiff and silent there; and despite the obvious efforts that Deborah and Allan made to be genial with the children, the very air in the room was charged with the feeling of trouble close ahead. Again Roger retreated into his den, and presently Laura came to him.

"Good night—I'm going out," she said, and she pressed her cheek lightly to his own. "What a dear you've been to me, dad," she murmured. And then she was gone.

A few minutes later Edith came in. She held a small note in her hand. "Well, father, I learned this afternoon what you've been keeping from me," she said.

Roger gave her a steady look. "You did, eh—Laura told you?"

"Yes, she did!" his daughter exclaimed fiercely. "And I can't help wondering, father——"

"Why did she tell you? Have you been at her again to-day?"

"Again? Not at all," she answered. "I've done as you

LAURA'S FATHER KNOCKED AT HER DOOR

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asked me to, let her alone. But to-day—mother's day—I got thinking of her."

"Leave your mother out of it, please. What did you say to Laura?"

"I tried to make her go back, of course——"

"And she told you——"

"He wouldn't have her! And then in a perfect tantrum she went on to tell me why!" Edith's eyes were cold with disgust. "And I'm wondering why you let her stay here—in the same house with my children!"

Roger reached out his hand. "Give me that note," he commanded. He read it quickly, then handed it back. The note was from Laura, a hasty good-by.

"Edith will explain," she wrote, "and you will see I can't stay any longer. It's simply too impossible. So I'm going to the man I love—and in a few days we'll be sailing for Naples. I know you won't try to interfere. It will make the divorce even simpler and everything easier all round. Please don't worry about me, dear; we'll soon be married over there. You've been so dear and sensible and I do so love you for it." Then came her name scrawled hastily. And at the bottom of the page: "I've paid every bill I can think of."

Edith read it in silence, her color slowly mounting.

"All right," said her father; "your children are safe."

She gave him a quick, angry look, then burst into tears and ran out of the room.

Roger sat without moving, his heavy face impassive. And so he remained for a long time. Well, *Laura* was gone—no mistake about that—and this time she was gone for good. She was going to live in Rome. Try to stop her? No. What good would it do? Wings of the Eagles, Rome reborn. That was it, she had hit it, struck the key-note of this new age. Rome reborn, all clean, old-fashioned Christian living swept away by millions of men at each others' throats like so many wolves. And at last quite openly to himself Roger admitted that he felt old. Old and beaten and out of date. Moments passed, and hours—he took little note of time. Nor did he see on the mantel the dark visage of "The Thinker" there, resting on his huge, clenched fist and brooding down upon him. Lower, imperceptibly, he sank into his leather chair.

Quiet had returned to his house.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

The Approach of a Crisis

BUT the quiet was dark to Roger now. Each night he spent in his study alone, for instinctively he felt the need of being by himself for a time, of shutting out his children and the lives that they were leading, lives out of which he now divined that other events would soon come forth to use up the last of the strength that was in him.

And Roger grew angry with the world. Why couldn't it let a man alone, an old man in a silent house alive for him with memories? Repeatedly in such hours his mind would go groping backward into the years behind him. What a long and winding road, half buried in the jungle, dim, almost impenetrable, made up of millions of small events, small worries, plans and problems, dreams, with which his days had all been filled. But the more he recalled, the more certain he grew that he was right. Life had never been like this; the world had never come smashing into his house, his very family, with its dirty, teeming tenements, its schools, its prisons, electric chairs, its feverish rush for money, its luxuries, its scandals. All these things had been in the world, but all remote and never real—mere things that he had read about.

War? Did he not remember wars that had come and gone in Europe? But they hadn't come into his home like this, first making him poor when he most needed money for Edith and her children, then plunging Deborah into a struggle which might very probably ruin her life, and now taking Laura and filling her mind with thoughts of pagan living. Why was every man, woman, and child, these days, bound up in the whole life of the world? What would come of it all? A new day out of this deafening night? Maybe so. But for him it would come too late. "What have I left to live for?"

Many questions of this kind, now vague, now suddenly acute, passed through his mind as he sat alone on those long winter evenings.

One night he glanced up from his chair and looked along his shelves till he saw the book that he wanted. Then he rose, and from its place he took an old black Bible. He had not looked at it for years. Turning to the story of Job, he read a couple of pages. He smiled idly to himself, and,

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frowning in a curious way, he slowly turned to other parts, his eye only stopping here and there, and just for a moment, then passing on. How old it all seemed, and how far away—a mere shadow, this book of those other days.

But what did it put him in mind of? Ah, now at last he had it. This book reminded him of the nights that had come just after Judith died. On one of those nights, sitting here in his chair, exhausted, he had fallen asleep. And in his sleep there had come to him a dim, strong figure of the past. He had seen his mother's face. He had wakened, and taking this book from the shelf he had read for hours, scowling, often barely seeing the print, but setting his jaw and reading on, seeking strength for the long battle which he felt was before him if he would live up to the promise he had made his wife. . . . He had lost that fight; he had gone down. . . . Gently he put the book aside.

He turned his head and looked up at the mantel, facing "The Thinker's" brooding frown. And as in the past, so now again, it was dark as everlasting night. For some moments he faced it steadily.

But that other night had not endured. At last he had risen out of it. And what he had done he could do again. Yes, Laura was gone. But if in her case he had failed to live up to his promise to her mother, he had still two other children. He had Edith to provide for, and Deborah with her life in the balance. And for what he would do to help them he knew that he had little time. For these last months had been telling swiftly, in small, queer, unexpected ways, slight but new sensations all through his heavy body.

One evening he rose and went to his desk, lit a cigar, and laid his hand upon a pile of letters which had been mounting steadily there. It was made up of Laura's bills, the ones she had not remembered. Send them after her to Rome for that Italian fellow to pay? No, it could not be thought of.

Roger turned to his dwindling bank-account, and from that his thoughts went to his business. He was not yet making money, he was still losing a little each week. But he would not cut expenses there. To the few that were left in his employ, to be turned away would mean dire need. And angrily he determined that they should not starve to pay Laura's bills. "The world for the strong, eh? Not in my office!" In Rome or Berlin or Vienna, all right! But not over here! He paid her bills from his bank-account and grimly eyed his balance.

By spring he would be penniless. And he had no one to turn to now, no rich young son-in-law who could aid. What about Edith and her children? Doggedly he set himself to the task of increasing his earnings, and meanwhile at home in the evenings he tried with Edith to get back upon their former footing. To do this was not easy at first, for his bitterness still rankled deep. "When you were in trouble I took you in, but when she was in trouble you turned her out, as you turned out John before her." In the room again vacated, George had now been reinstalled. One night Edith found her father there looking in through the open doorway, and the look on his massive face was hard.

"Better have the room disinfected again," he muttered when he saw her. He turned and went slowly down the stairs. And Edith was late for dinner that night.

BUT Edith had her children. Weeks passed, and the mother side of her, that Roger liked, appeared again. And though he bitterly told himself that it was just this mother side which had made her so hard on her sister, still, as he watched her day by day, as he heard her voice mingle with those of her children early in the morning, and as he saw her with them at night hearing their lessons patiently, reading them fairy-stories, and holding them smilingly in her arms, the appeal of it grew upon him. This at least was no "ménage."

"I can't blame her," Roger thought. "She's what her life has made her."

And one evening when the clock struck nine, putting down his paper he suggested gruffly: "Well, daughter, how about some chess?"

Edith flushed a little: "Why, yes, dear, I'd be glad to."

She rose and went to get the board. So the games were resumed, and part at least of their old affection came to life. But only a part. It could never be quite the same again.

And though he saw little of Deborah, slowly, almost unawares to them both, she assumed the old place she had had in his home—as the one who had been right here in the house through all the years since her

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mother had died, the one who had stuck by him, the one who had helped and never asked help, keeping her own troubles all to herself.

Glancing at her from time to time, he noticed new lines about her wide mouth, a drawn, dark look about her gray eyes, and he felt a struggle deepening, a strain becoming torture there. Nor was it all on Laura's account. Laura's affair was only a part, which had mingled with Deborah's own affair, her love for Allan, Bruce's death, the presence of Edith here in the house, the war, and her struggle in her schools so suddenly intensified. All these things were combining now to bring on the crisis of her life, goading her to a sacrifice which he felt would embitter the rest of her days.

"If she doesn't marry, she'll try to go on. But she won't go on as she has before—she'll grow old fast, she'll lose her hold, all that has made her what she is."

But she was facing it silently, in the meantime grinding along through her work with a quiet, stern devotion to the big vision that she had of a glad new world for children. And with his anger in the face of that strange, glittering, pagan world Laura had so brought home to him, Roger liked to recall the fight Deborah was making here.

These things he did not think clearly out; he only sensed them vaguely. But he liked to feel she was in the house. He found himself sitting up late at night, waiting until she should come home, when they would have a little talk. He fell back into his habit of going before dinner to his daughter's bedroom door to ask whether she would be home that night. At one such time, getting no response and thinking that Deborah was not there, he opened the door part way to make sure. And he saw her at her dresser, staring at herself in the glass, rigid as though in a trance, her strong, comely face so stricken, her eyes so terribly absorbed, that as her father stood in the hall, his heart began pounding violently.

IN THE dining-room a few minutes later, he heard her step upon the stairs. She came in and sat down quietly. He gave her his usual greeting and then quickly turned to George, keeping up the conversation, for he knew that she wished to be let alone. As soon as dinner was over she said her good-nights and left the house.

And Roger tried to think what he could do. How long had this been going on? How often had she stared at herself in her room like that and then come quietly down to them? Never had she so appealed to him as now, when he'd seen her in agony. She had always been so strong before—too strong, too independent. When she came home at midnight he was waiting up for her. He had foraged in the kitchen, and on his study-table he had set out some supper. And while she sat there eating, her father watched her from his chair.

"Things going badly in school?" he inquired.

"Yes," she replied.

There was silence.

"What's wrong?"

"To-night we had a line of mothers reaching out into the street. Inside we had a dozen bags. We keep them hung up in the basement, and we ask every child with a father at work to bring something to school—old clothes or food, if it's just a potato—to put in the bags. To-night nearly half the bags were full, but there were a hundred and seventy mothers. We had to send most of them home empty-handed. Some of them cried, and one of them fainted—she's to have a baby soon."

"Can't you get any money up-town?"

"I have," she answered grimly. "I've been a beggar—Heaven knows—on every friend I've got in town. And I've kept a press-agent hard at work trying to make the public see that Belgium is right here in New York." She stopped and went on with her supper. "But it's a bad time for work like mine," she continued presently. "If we're to keep it going we must above all keep it cheap. That's the key-note these days—keep everything cheap, at any cost, so that men can expensively kill one another." Her voice had a bitter ring to it. "You try to talk peace and they bowl you over with facts on the need of preparedness. The only way to serve your country is to go and kill somebody. Shoot him, jab him—be a man. If you don't, you're a 'mollycoddle.'" Her lips tightened suddenly. "But we'll have some preparedness of our own."

"What do you mean?" her father asked.

"To teach every child what his life can be!" she replied in a hard and quivering tone. "A fight? Oh, yes! So long as he lives! But a fight for the people every time—for a world so full of happy lives that men

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will think hard, and for more than one week —before letting themselves be led by the nose — by the diplomats — into war and death!" She rose from her chair, with a weary smile: "Here I am making a speech again. I've made so many lately it's become a habit. I'm tired out, dad; I'm going to bed."

Her father looked at her anxiously. "You're seeing things out of proportion," he said. "You've worked so hard you're getting stale. You ought to get out of it for a while."

"I can't!" she answered sharply. "You don't know—you don't even guess—how it takes every hour—all the demands!"

"Where's Allan these days?"

"Working," was her harsh reply. "Trying to keep his hospital going with half its staff. The woman who was backing him is giving her money to Belgium instead."

"Do you see much of him?"

"Every day. Let's drop it. Shall we?"

"All right, my dear——"

And they said good night.

Gone was his gloom of the last few weeks. In its place was a deepening suspense. Soon it would all be decided.

LAURA SOLD A PART OF HER JEWELRY TO THE LITTLE GALICIAN JEW AROUND THE CORNER.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

"Bills for the House"

IN the meantime, in the house, Edith had gone on with her work. She had tried hard to scrimp and save, but it was very difficult. Her children had so many needs, they were all growing up so fast. Each month brought fresh demands on her purse, and the fund from the sale of her belongings had been used up long ago. Her sole resource was the modest allowance her father gave her for running the house, and she had not asked him for more than that. She had put off trouble from month to month. But one evening early in March, when he gave her the regular monthly check, she hesitated, and then she said:

"I'm very sorry, father dear, but I'm afraid we'll need more money this month."

He glanced up from his paper: "What's the matter?"

She gave him a forced little smile. "Oh, nothing in particular. Goodness knows I've tried to keep down expenses, but—well, we're a pretty large household."

"Yes," said Roger kindly, "I know. Are the month's bills in?"

"Yes."

"Let me see them." She brought him the bills and he looked relieved. "Not so many," he ventured.

"No, but they're large."

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"Why, look here, Edith," he said abruptly, a few moments later, "these are bills for two months—some for three, even four!"

"I know—that's just the trouble. I couldn't meet them at the time."

"Why didn't you tell me?"

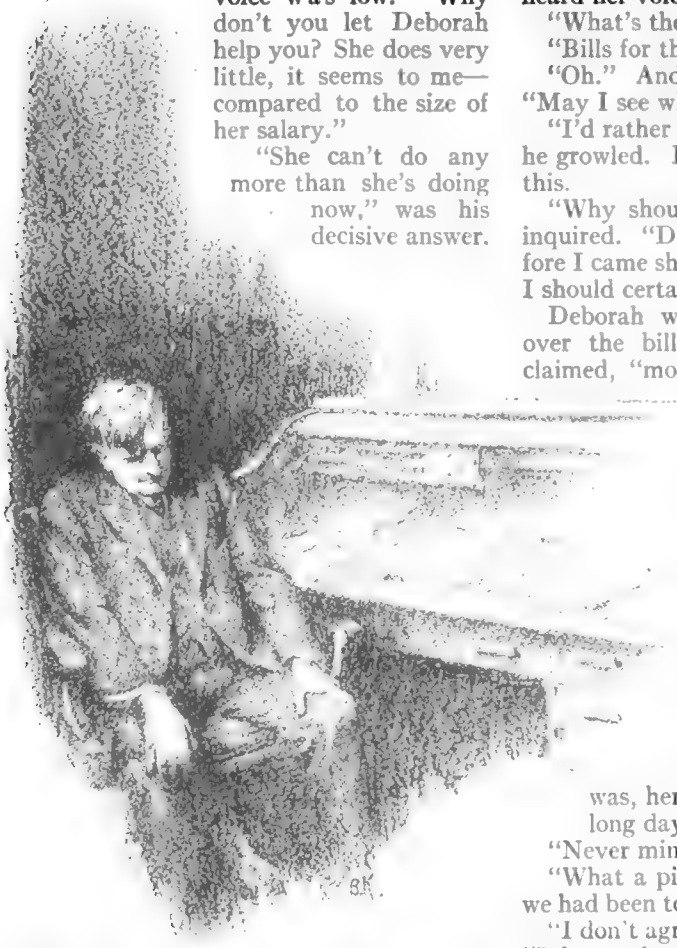
"Laura was here. I didn't want to bother you then—you had enough on your mind as it was. I've done the best I could, father dear—I've sold everything, you know—but I've about come to the end of my rope." And her manner said clearly: "I've done my part. I'm only a woman. I'll have to leave the rest to you."

"I see—I see." And Roger knitted his heavy brows. "I presume I can get it somehow."

This would play the very devil with things!

"Father." Edith's voice was low. "Why don't you let Deborah help you? She does very little, it seems to me—compared to the size of her salary."

"She can't do any more than she's doing now," was his decisive answer.



ROGER WAS STILL LOSING A LITTLE MONEY EACH WEEK. BY SPRING HE WOULD BE PENNILESS.

Edith looked at him, her color high. She hesitated, then burst out: "I saw her check-book the other day—she had left it on the table! She's spending thousands—every month!"

"That's not her own money," Roger said.

"No; that's money she gets for her fads—her work for those tenement children! She can get money enough for *them!*"

He flung out his hand: "Leave her out of this, please!"

"Very well, father, just as you say." And she sat there hurt and silent while again he looked slowly through the bills. He jotted down figures and added them up. They came to a bit over nine hundred dollars. Then Deborah's key was heard in the door, and Roger scowled the deeper. She came into the room, but he did not look up. He heard her voice:

"What's the matter, Edith?"

"Bills for the house."

"Oh." And Deborah came to her father. "May I see what's the trouble, dear?"

"I'd rather you wouldn't. It's nothing," he growled. He wanted her to keep out of this.

"Why shouldn't she see?" Edith tartly inquired. "Deborah is living here—and before I came she ran the house. In her place I should certainly want to know."

Deborah was already glancing rapidly over the bills. "Why, Edith," she exclaimed, "most of these bills go back for months. Why didn't you pay them when they were due?"

"Simply because I hadn't the money!"

"You've had the regular monthly amount."

"That didn't last very long——"

"Then why didn't you tell us?"

"Laura was here."

Deborah gave a quick shrug of impatience, and Roger saw how tired she was, her nerves all on edge from her long day.

"Never mind about it now," he put in.

"What a pity!" Deborah muttered. "If we had been told, we could have cut down."

"I don't agree with you!" Edith rejoined. "I have already done that myself! I've done nothing else!"

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"Have the servants been paid?" her sister asked.

"No, they haven't——"

"Since when?"

"Three months!"

Roger got up and walked the room. Deborah tried to speak quietly:

"I can't quite see where the money has gone."

"Can't you? Then look at my checkbook." And Edith produced it with a glare.

Her sister turned over a few of the stubs. "What's this item?"

"Where?"

"Here. A hundred and twenty-two dollars."

"The dentist," Edith answered. "Not extravagant, is it, for five children?"

"I see," said Deborah. "And this?"

"Bedding," was Edith's sharp response. "A mattress and more blankets. I found there weren't half enough in the house."

"You burned John's, didn't you?"

"Naturally!"

Then all at once both grew ashamed.

"Let's be sensible," Deborah said. "We've got to do something, Edith, and we can't till we're certain where we stand."

"All right——"

They went on more calmly and took up the items one by one. Deborah finished and was silent.

"Well, father, what's to be done?" she asked.

"I don't know," he answered shortly. He felt his daughters watching him.

"How much have you left in the bank?"

"Not much—about a thousand."

"Oh," said Edith in relief.

"That's very little!" Deborah said. "Are you still losing, dad, in the office?"

"A little, yes."

"Losing? You're *losing* money?" exclaimed his other daughter.

"Yes, and he has been," Deborah said, "ever since September."

"Well!" breathed Edith, in surprise. "Then why in the world has he kept it open?"

"Because of his employees, of course."

"*What?*" Edith's pretty face was a study.

"Suppose you leave that to father. Woman's place is the home, you know; we'd better cut expenses here."

"I'm afraid that's impossible, Deborah. I've already cut as much as I can."

"So did I in my school," said her sister. "And when I thought I had reached the end, I called in an expert. He showed me ways of saving that I'd never dreamed of."

"What kind of an expert would you advise here?" Edith's small lip curled in scorn.

"Domestic science, naturally. I have a woman who does nothing else. She shows women in their homes just how to make money count the most."

"What women? And what homes? Tenements?"

"Yes. She's one of my teachers."

"Thank you," said Edith indignantly, "but I don't care to have my children brought down to tenement standards!"

"I didn't mean to *have* them! But I know she could show you a great many things you can buy for less."

"I'm afraid I shouldn't agree with her."

"Why not, Edith?"

"Because she knows only tenement children—nothing of children bred like mine."

Deborah drew a quick, short breath. She bit her lip, controlled herself.

"Very well, I'll try again. This house is plenty large enough so that by a little crowding we could make room for somebody else. And I know a teacher in one of my schools who'd be only too glad——"

"Take a boarder, you mean?"

"Yes, I do! We've got to do something!"

"No!"

Deborah threw up her hands. "All right, Edith, I'm through. What do *you* propose?"

"I can try to do without Hannah again——"

"That will be hard on *all* of us. But I guess you'll have to."

"Very well."

"But unfortunately that won't be enough."

Edith's face grew tenser. "I'm afraid it will have to be, just now. I've had about all I can stand for one night!"

"I'm sorry," Deborah answered. For a moment they confronted each other. And Edith's look said to Deborah plainly: "You're spending thousands, thousands, on those tenement children! You can get money enough for them, but you won't raise a hand to help with mine!" And as plainly Deborah answered: "My children are starving, shivering, freezing! What do yours know about being poor?" Two mothers, each with a family, and each one baffled,

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brought to bay. There was something so insatiable in each angry mother's eyes.

"I think you'd better leave this to me," said Roger very huskily. And both his daughters turned with a start, as though in their bitter absorption they had forgotten his presence there. Both flushed, and now the glances of all three avoided each other. For they felt how sordid it had been.

Deborah turned to her sister. "I'm sorry, Edith," she said again, and this time there were tears in her eyes.

"So am I," said Edith unsteadily, and in a moment she left the room. Deborah stood watching her father.

"I'm ashamed of myself," she said. "Well? Shall we talk it over?"

"No," he replied. "I can manage it somehow, Deborah, and I prefer that you leave it to me."

Roger went into his study and sank grimly into his chair. Yes, it had been pretty bad; it had been ugly, ominous. He took paper and pencil and set to work. How he had come to hate this job of wrestling with figures. Of the five thousand dollars borrowed in August he had barely a thousand left. The first semi-annual interest was due next week and must be paid. The balance would carry them through March and on well into April. By that time he hoped to be making money, for business was better every week. But what of this nine hundred dollars in debts? Half at least must be paid at once.

Lower and lower he sank in his chair. But a few moments later his blunt, heavy visage cleared, and with a little sigh of relief he put away his papers, turned out the lights, and went up-stairs. The dark house felt friendly and comforting now.

In his room he opened that safe in the corner where his collection of curious rings had lain unnoticed for many months. He drew out a tray, sat down by the light, and began to look them over. At first only small, inanimate objects; gradually, as from tray after tray they glittered duskily up at him, they began to yield their riches as they had so often done before. Spanish, French, Italian, Bohemian, Hungarian, Russian, and Assyrian, rings small and rings enormous, religious rings and magic rings, poison rings, some black with age for all his careful polishing—again they stole deep into Roger's imagination with suggestions of the many hands that had worn them through the centuries, of women kneeling in old churches, couples in dark, crooked streets, adventures, love, hate, jealousy, youth and fire, dreams and passion. . . .

At last he remembered why he was here. He thought of possible purchasers. He knew so many dealers, but he knew, too, that the war had played the devil with them as with every one else. Still, he thought of several who would find it hard to resist the temptation. He would see them to-morrow, one by one, and get them bidding, haggling. Roger frowned disgustedly.

No help for it, though, and it was a relief. It would bring a truce in the house for a time.

CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

The Battle Between Two Mothers

BUT the truce was brief.

On the afternoon when he sold his collection Roger came home all out of sorts. He had been forced to haggle long; it had been a mean, inglorious day; one of the brightest paths in his life had ended in a pigsty. But at least he had bought some peace in his house! Women, women, women! If only his grandsons were grown up, to keep him a little company here! They would all go into his den and smoke, and let the women yap outside! He shut the front door with a slam and went up to his room for a little rest—a little of what he had paid for! On the stairs he passed young Betsy, and he startled the girl by the sudden glare of reproach he bestowed upon her. He was no feminist that night!

The brief talk he had with Edith was far from reassuring. With no Deborah there to wound her pride, Edith quickly showed herself friendly to her father, and even repentant and eager to do anything in her power. But when he advised her to keep her nurse, she at once refused to consider it.

"I want you to," he persisted, with an anxious note in his voice. He had tried life without Hannah here and he did not care to try it again.

"That's already settled, father dear; I sent her away this morning."

"Then you get her right back!" he exclaimed.

But Edith's face grew obstinate, and despite all his urgings she stuck firmly to her point. "I don't care to give Deborah," she

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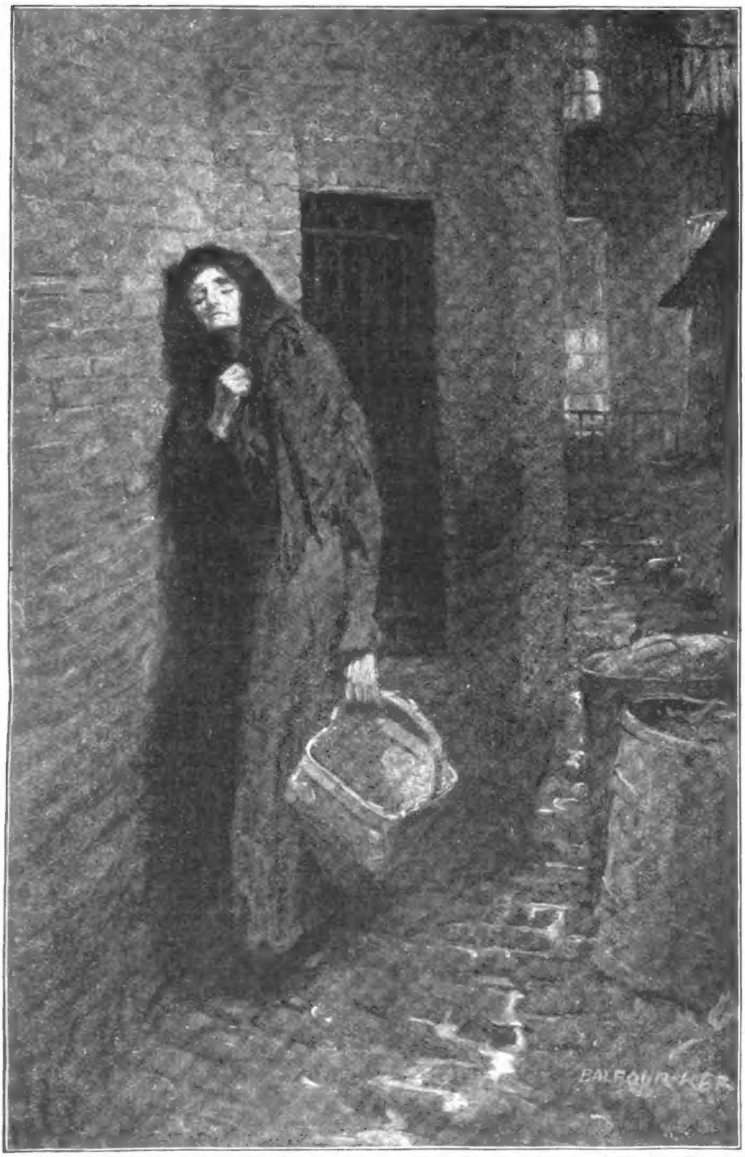
said, "another chance to talk as she did."

Roger looked at her gloomily. "She will, though," he was thinking. "You two have only just begun. Let any little point arise, that a couple of men would settle offhand, and you two will get together and go it! There'll be no living in the house! I've sold my rings," he added. "Now I'd better look over my clothes. My Sunday breeches are quite new. *They* might bring in a few dollars—" He sighed.



"THERE WERE A HUNDRED AND SEVENTY MOTHERS. WE HAD TO SEND MOST OF THEM HOME EMPTY-HANDED."

"Don't worry, father dear," she said. "I'll get along——"

"Humph!" was his ungracious reply.

As in the autumn, so now again, Edith threw herself fiercely into each day with its innumerable little tasks. And when the night found her exhausted, she simply gritted her teeth and kept on. For Edith had pluck in plenty. She discouraged the visits of her few remaining women friends, for the mere sight of their faces, their clothes, and their prosperity roused hard feelings in her breast. She even broke off with Madge Deering, for more than all others Madge made her feel what her children were being deprived of. Madge's husband had left her an income of nearly fifteen thousand a year. What a difference that money made! What a host of things Madge could do for her girls! And Madge was independent! *She* didn't have to beg and nag and fight for every little thing! Tears of anger and fatigue would come at times in Edith's eyes.

Always in the back of her mind was the rankling thought that all this strain had been intensified twofold because Deborah would not do her share. And this rankling was kept ever fresh by Deborah's presence in the house. Deborah never spoke of household affairs, but in her opinion half at least of all Edith considered essential was mere fuss and feathers.

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"Don't it beat the devil," her father thought, "how much a woman can say without words?" Deborah had shown tact before, and tolerance and friendliness. Why couldn't she show some of it now?

But again he would feel her side of it. He still went occasionally down to his club of Italian boys; and now under all the clamor and din of Deborah's big family, the turbulent vitality there, by degrees he felt the poverty, too. One night in the big playroom, where the children were rushing about at their games and the place was in an uproar, he saw a thin little Jewish boy suddenly pitch forward, white and lifeless, on the floor. It was some minutes before he came to, and when he did the child began to cry in a curious, haunting way. And this was but one case in hundreds. Roger felt the unceasing demands on his daughter and her straining to meet them; he felt the effect of it all on her nerves, driving her steadily onward into that crisis he saw ahead.

There came times, too, down in his school, when the veil of his personal troubles lifted and he saw life in the large. Nearly half the older boys in his club had gone back to Italy, already on the brink of war. He had argued angrily with each one, but the thing was a madness in their eyes. Wings of the Eagles, Rome reborn! For them the work of Deborah's school, its fusing of many races, its ideals of human brotherhood—all these for them had been in vain. Where was the use of work like this if brute force were the power that ruled and if this madness were in men? There was this use: it was one of those lone attempts to keep a light shining through the dark.

But again in his house the veil would fall, and with steadily sharpening suspense he watched the silent battle go on between the two mothers, one fighting for thousands of children, the other for just five—her own. The struggle was silent and it was deep, so deep that often it barely appeared. Again and again, as though ashamed, the two sisters would try to be friendly and kind, but soon the clash would be felt again. It went so much deeper than money; it was so wide, this gap between. Sometimes it seemed to Roger, sitting there at dinner and racking his brains to keep the peace, that there was not a topic he could bring up which would not bring on a clash. One night in desperation he proposed the theatre.

"I'm afraid we can't afford it," said Edith, glancing at Deborah. And she had the same answer, again and again, for the requests her children made, if they involved but the smallest expense. "No, dear, I'm afraid we can't afford that," she would say gently, with a sigh. And under this constant pressure, these nightly little thrusts and jabs, Deborah would grow rigid with annoyance and impatience.

"For Heaven's sake, Edith," she burst out one night when the children had gone to their lessons, "can you think of nothing at all, except your own little family?"

"Here it comes again," thought Roger, scowling into his paper.

He heard Edith's curt reply: "No, I can't, not nowadays. Nobody *else* seems to think of them."

"You mean that I don't!"

"Do you?"

"Yes! I'm thinking of George! Do you want him killed in the trenches—in a war with Germany or Japan?"

"Are you utterly mad?" demanded Edith.

"No, I'm awake—my eyes are open! But yours are shut so tight, my dear, you can't see what has happened! You know this war has made us poor and your own life harder, but that's all. The big thing it has done you know nothing about!"

"Suppose you teach me," Edith said, with a prim, provoking little smile.

Deborah turned on her angrily: "It has shown that all such mothers as you are out of date and have got to change! That we're bound together — all over the world —whether we like it or whether we don't! And that if we want to keep out of war we've got to do it by coming out of our own homes *and thinking, Edith, thinking!*"

"Votes for women," Edith said.

Deborah looked at her, rose with a shrug. "All right, Edith, I give up."

"Thank you. I'm not worth it. You'd better go back to your office now and go on with your work of saving the world. And use every hour of your time and every dollar you possess. I'll stay here and look after my children."

Deborah had gone into the hall. Roger, buried deep in his paper, heard the heavy street-door close. He looked up with a feverish sigh, and saw at the open door of his study George and Betsy standing there, curious, solemn, and wide-eyed. How long had they been listening?

*The next instalment of "**His Family**" will appear in the April number.*

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HEADING AND SKETCHES BY RALPH BARTON

UNDER THE SPREADING CHESTNUT TREE

EDITOR'S NOTE—Though the sign is the Chestnut Tree, no story is barred by its youth. We will gladly pay for available ones. Address all manuscripts to "The Chestnut Tree," enclosing stamped, addressed envelope.

AT THE farmers' conference in the country store the talk drifted to the work done by the various wives of the committee present.

"Wal," contributed Uncle Ez, "my wife is one in a million. She gets up in the mornin', milks seventeen cows, and gets breakfast for ten hard-working men before six o'clock, by heck."

"She must be a very robust woman," volunteered the commercial traveler who happened to be present.

"No, stranger, she ain't what you'd call so strong; she's more pale and delicate-like. Gosh!"—with a burst of enthusiasm—"if that woman was only strong, I don't know the work she couldn't do!"

THE large, portly colored man entered the drug-store and looked around uncertainly.

"Young man," he said to the clerk confidentially, "has you got any letter-paper and envelopes with flesh-colored borders?"

"Was it mourning-paper you wished for, sir?" inquired the clever clerk.

"You's struck it, disackly!. But I disremembered the name. Gib me a box of it, if you please, sah."

THE Higgins family were moving from Twenty-sixth Street to Thirty-sixth Street. Three vans had carried all their belongings during the afternoon, except Mrs. Higgins's mother's cut-glass bowl, which Mrs. Higgins wanted to carry because it was not easy to pack, and the grandfather's clock that was never trusted to the moving-vans. Higgins always carried it.

Holding it with both arms, Higgins walked down the front steps like an amateur tight-rope dancer and started up the avenue. It demanded all of his strength, breath, and attention.

At Twenty-eighth Street Higgins set the clock down carefully and mopped his face.

"Shay, old man," said a blear-eyed individual who had been staggering up the avenue behind him. "Shay, why don't you get a watch?"

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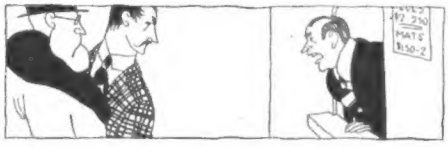
A SHORT time ago an eminent engineering firm in Philadelphia had occasion to send one of its promising young hopefuls to Washington. As he was sent hastily and was detained longer than he expected he found that he simply had to have a clean shirt. Buying a "classy" one, he charged it to the firm. On his return to town he said to one of his fellow workers: "See this shirt? I bought it on the firm."

"You did?" said the other.

"And did you put it down as 'shirts'?"

"Ah, no, boy," said he, "I ate it."



MADAME BERNHARDT'S recent engagement in Boston for a week included six night performances and matinées Wednesday and Saturday that called for special rehearsals. On Tuesday afternoon, the president of a big Boston charity met Madame Bernhardt's manager in front of the box-office and said that if the actors could wedge in a special matinée on Friday afternoon, he would buy out half the house. The tired box-office man listened with a look of disgust. The manager consulted Madame Bernhardt, and coming back to the lobby said to the Boston man:

"Madame Bernhardt has agreed to put on that special matinée Friday."

And the box-office man, sticking his head out of the window, growled angrily: "Say, you fellows, what do you think *I* am? A horse?"

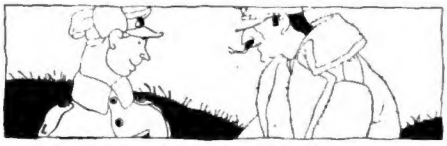
THE average foreigner can rarely comprehend the geographical area of the United States, as was quite fully illustrated by the Englishman and his valet who had been traveling due west from Boston for five days. At the end of the fifth day master and servant were seated in the smoking-car, and it was observed that the man was gazing steadily and thoughtfully out of the window. Finally, his companion became curious. "William," said he, "of what are you thinking?"

"I was just thinking, sir, about the discovery of Hamerica," replied the valet. "Columbus didn't do such a wonderful thing, after all, when he found this country, did he, now, sir? Hafter hall's said an' done, 'ow could 'e 'elp it?"

THE politician rushed past the official Cerberus into the editorial sanctum. "What do you mean?" he roared. "What do you mean by insulting me as you did in last night's *Clamor*?"

"Just a moment," replied the editor. "Didn't the story appear as you gave it to us, namely, that you had resigned as city treasurer?"

"It did. But you put it under the head 'Public Improvements.'"



AFTER the battle of Mons an officer congratulated an Irishman on his conspicuous bravery under fire.

"Well, Pat," he said, "how did you feel during the engagement?"

"Feel, captain," answered Pat. "I felt as if ivvery hair on me head was a band of music, and they were all playing 'Home, Sweet Home.'"

THEY were dancing the one-step. The music was heavenly. The swish of her silken skirts was divine. The fragrance of the roses upon her bosom was intoxicating.

"Ah," she smiled sweetly, with an arch look up into his face, "you remind me of one of Whitman's poems."

A sudden dizziness seemed to seize him. It was as if he were floating in a dream. When he had sufficiently gained his breath he spoke:

"Which one?"

"Oh, any one," she replied. "The feet are mixed in all of them."

"I THINK," she said, "that he has deceived us all. I don't think he is anything more than a clerk."

"Why?"

"Because right in the middle of a proposal last night his mind wandered, and he said: 'You could wear a size smaller without any trouble at all.'"

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